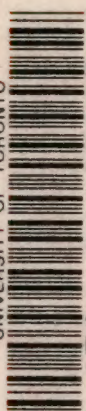


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ANNA KARENINE.



Anna Karenine

BY

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An Illustrated Edition

THE WORLD PUBLISHING COMPANY

CLEVELAND, OHIO

NEW YORK, N. Y.

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ANNA KARENINE.

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“ ‘Vengeance is mine!’ saith the Lord.”

PART FIRST.

CHAPTER I.

A SHADOW had fallen upon the Oblowsky household. The princess had learned of her husband's “affairs” with the French governess of her children, and had declared that she would no longer live under the same roof with him. The wife remained in her private apartments all day, the husband absented himself, and their children, free from all restraint, wandered from room to room, puzzled as to the cause of the sudden release from their tasks. Even the servants felt the influence of coming trouble, and, one by one, gave notice of their departure.

The climax had come about a few nights before, when the Prince Stépane Archadievitch Oblowsky, returning from the theater, full of gayety and high spirits, had sought his wife in vain. She was neither in the salon nor in her boudoir, but was finally discovered by him sitting in her bedroom with the letter, which had told her all, in her hands. There she sat, an expression of despair, of terror, and of indignation on her face.

“What is the meaning of this?” she asked, holding out the venomous sheet.

Stépane was dumfounded. Instead of defending himself, or denying the anonymous charge, or even of asking pardon and forgiveness, he allowed a cynical smile to pass across his lips, and said nothing.

His wife burst forth into a torrent of reproach and bitter upbraiding, and then fled from the room. From that moment she had refused to see him.

CHAPTER II.

ONE morning, three days later, Stépane rose from his bed, and having donned his dressing-gown, summoned his valet.

Matvei, an old servant of the family, entered the room with a telegram in his hand. Stépane hurriedly opened it.

"Matvei," he said, "my sister, Anna Arcadievná, will arrive to-morrow."

"Thank goodness, sir," said the old and privileged servitor, who, in the coming of his master's sister, foresaw the only means of a reconciliation. "Will she be alone, or is her husband coming?" he added.

"Alone. See that her rooms are made ready, and show this telegram to your mistress."

The old valet left the room, but returned before Stépane had proceeded far in his toilet, with the telegram still in his hand.

"My mistress says that she is about to leave your house, and, as regards this message, you are to do as seems best to you."

Stépane stood silent for a few moments. Then a slight smile passed across his face.

"And what do you think of it all, Matvei?" he said.

"I think, sir, that it will arrange itself."

"Arrange itself?"

"Without a doubt, sir."

"You think so? Ah! who is there?" asked Stépane, as a light knock sounded on the door.

"It is I, sir," said a firm but pleasant voice; and Matróna Philomonovna, his children's nurse, entered the room.

"What is it, Matróna?" asked Stépane. "What do you want of me?"

"I want you, sir, to go to madame and ask her pardon. She is broken-hearted, and it is pitiable to see her. And then, too, sir, you must think of the children."

"But she will not admit me—"

"You can at least try, sir; and it is your duty."



"Very well, Matrona; I will try. You may go now. Matvei, give me my things; I will finish dressing;" and this the old servant did with a satisfaction that could not be concealed.

CHAPTER III.

DARIA ALEXANDROVNA, dressed in a simple morning-robe, looking pale and haggard, her beautiful eyes be-dimmed from excess of grief and weeping, was seated before an open desk, hurriedly turning over the contents of its drawers. For three days she had been struggling between two inclinations—the one, to fly for refuge to her mother; the other, to do her duty and remain by her children. The desire to punish and humiliate the husband who had deceived her was almost uncontrollable. But then came the thought of her little ones, so dearly loved, and so innocent. She must consider them before herself.

The door opened, and intuitively she felt that her husband had entered the room. She hastily pushed to the open drawers, and raised a face to him on which, in place of the severe and scornful look she would fain have assumed, only doubt and suffering were to be seen.

"Dolly," he said in a quiet, humble tone.

She threw a hurried glance at him as he stood there looking young, handsome, and without a care.

"He is happy and content," she thought to herself. "While as for me—" and her mouth twitched nervously.

"What do you wish?" she asked, coldly.

"Dolly," he repeated in a low voice, "Anna arrives to-morrow."

"That is of no interest to me. I can not receive her."

"But you must, Dolly. It is necessary."

"Go away! go away!" she cried in a broken, grief-laden voice, without looking at him.

Calm as he had been, Stépane, now that he saw his wife's face so completely overshadowed with grief, and heard the sorrow in her tones, felt a lump rise within his throat, and his eyes filled with tears.

"What have I done, Dolly?" he said. "In Heaven's name, what have I done? Can you not forgive me? Can you not consider the nine years of our married life? And if, in a moment of impulse and temptation—"

She turned suddenly upon him, her face again contracted into hard and bitter lines.

"Leave me!" she cried again. "Go away! Don't speak to me of your impulses and your temptations!"

She strove to rise, as if to leave the room, but fell back sobbing in her chair.

"Dolly," he said, almost himself in tears, "for God's sake, think of the children! They are not to blame. It is I, and I alone—I know it, and I ask you now what I can do to earn your forgiveness?"

There was a moment's silence, and then she said:

"You speak of the children—you, who have only looked upon them as pets and playthings. But to me they are all the world—everything, do you understand? And now the doubt is killing me whether I should take them away with me or leave them with their father, who is nothing but a debauchee! After what has passed, it would be impossible for us to live together again. My husband—their father"—she added, her voice rising—"engaged in a *liaison* with—"

"What would you have me do?" interrupted Stépane, with bowed head and shamefaced look.

"You disgust me!" she cried, her feelings overcoming her. "Your tears are simple pretense. You have never loved me. You have neither heart nor honor. Henceforth, to me, you are a stranger!" and as she spoke the word her voice was full of bitter, implacable anger.

He gazed at her, surprised and half frightened. He could not understand how his pity had incensed his wife—a woman.

At this moment the voice of one of the children was heard crying in the adjoining room. A sudden change came over her face. For one moment she hesitated, then rose and hurriedly moved toward the door.

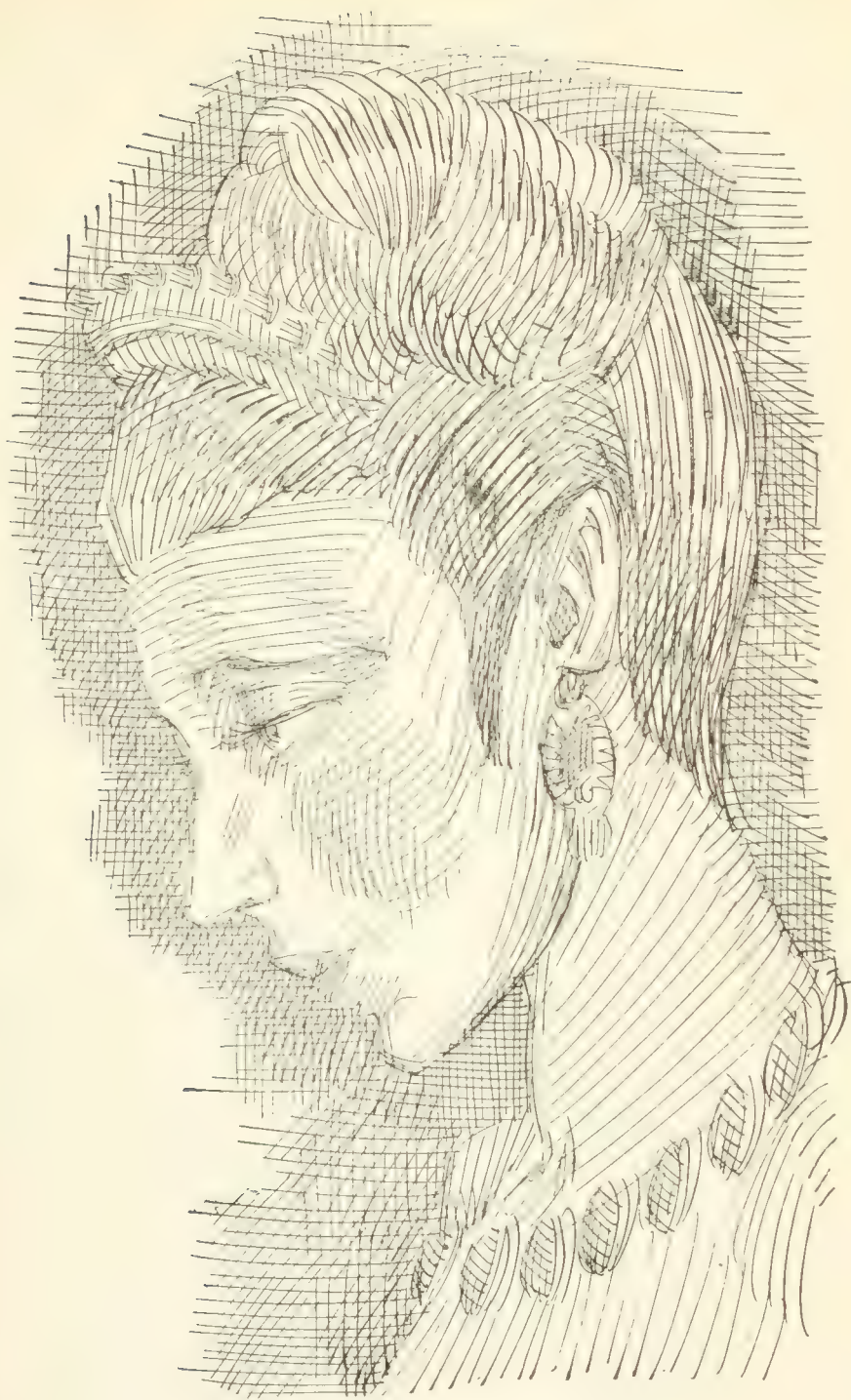
"Dolly, one word!" he said, following her.

She turned upon him.

"If you follow me, I will call the servants, and the children shall know you for the coward you are! To-day I leave you forever!"

She went out and closed the door violently behind her.

Stépane remained for a few moments, lost in thought, and then, with a sigh, quietly left the room and returned to his own apartments.



PRINCESS OBLOWSKY



"Matvei," he called, "see that the little salon is prepared for my sister Anna Arcadiевна."

A few minutes later he had left the house.

The Princess Dolly, having quieted the children, returned to her own room. She heard the noise of her husband's carriage as he drove away.

Resuming her former seat, she clasped her hands across her forehead as if to aid her thoughts and memory.

"He has gone!" she said to herself. "Is he still deceiving me—why did I not ask him plainly? No! we could never live together again; and yet, to live as two strangers beneath one roof! It is too cruel! How I have loved him! And, my God! how I still love him! Perhaps it is my fault for having loved him so much—"

Her thoughts were interrupted by Matrona Philomovna, who entered the room to ask some questions regarding the care of the children. The distraction served to relieve the mind of the princess from the terrible strain left by the recent interview and her own jealous grief.

CHAPTER IV.

IN the society of St. Petersburg and Moscow there was no more popular young man than Stépane Archadievitch. Handsome, of ever-cheerful and good-natured disposition, he could claim as a friend almost every one with whom he came in social contact. Through the influence of Alexis Karénine, the husband of his sister Anna, himself a leading member of the imperial ministry, Stépane had obtained the office of president of one of the tribunals of Moscow. During the three years in which he had now held the position, he had gained the respect and esteem of all with whom his official duties brought him in contact—superiors, colleagues, and inferiors.

On this morning, when he reached his bureau, he was soon immersed in official affairs with the other members of the Council. At the end of a two-hours' session, he was informed that a stranger wished to see him and was waiting in Stépane's own private office.

"Ah, Levine!" he cried, with a smile of welcome, as he entered the room. "What good wind has blown you here? How long have you been waiting?"

"I have just arrived in Moscow," answered the other, "and came at once to see you."

"And none could be more welcome," said Stépane, heartily. "But you have not told me what has induced you to leave the country and visit us poor dwellers in the city."

"I will tell you all my news later on—"

"Which means," interrupted Stépane, "that you will dine with me this afternoon. I can not ask you to my house, as my wife is not well, but I shall be at liberty at three o'clock, and we will dine together at Gourive's."

"With pleasure," answered Levine; "and now, can you tell me one thing"—and here he blushed and stammered like a boy—"the Cherbatzkys, are they in town?"

Stépane smiled. He had known for some time that Levine was deeply in love with his own sister-in-law, Kitty.

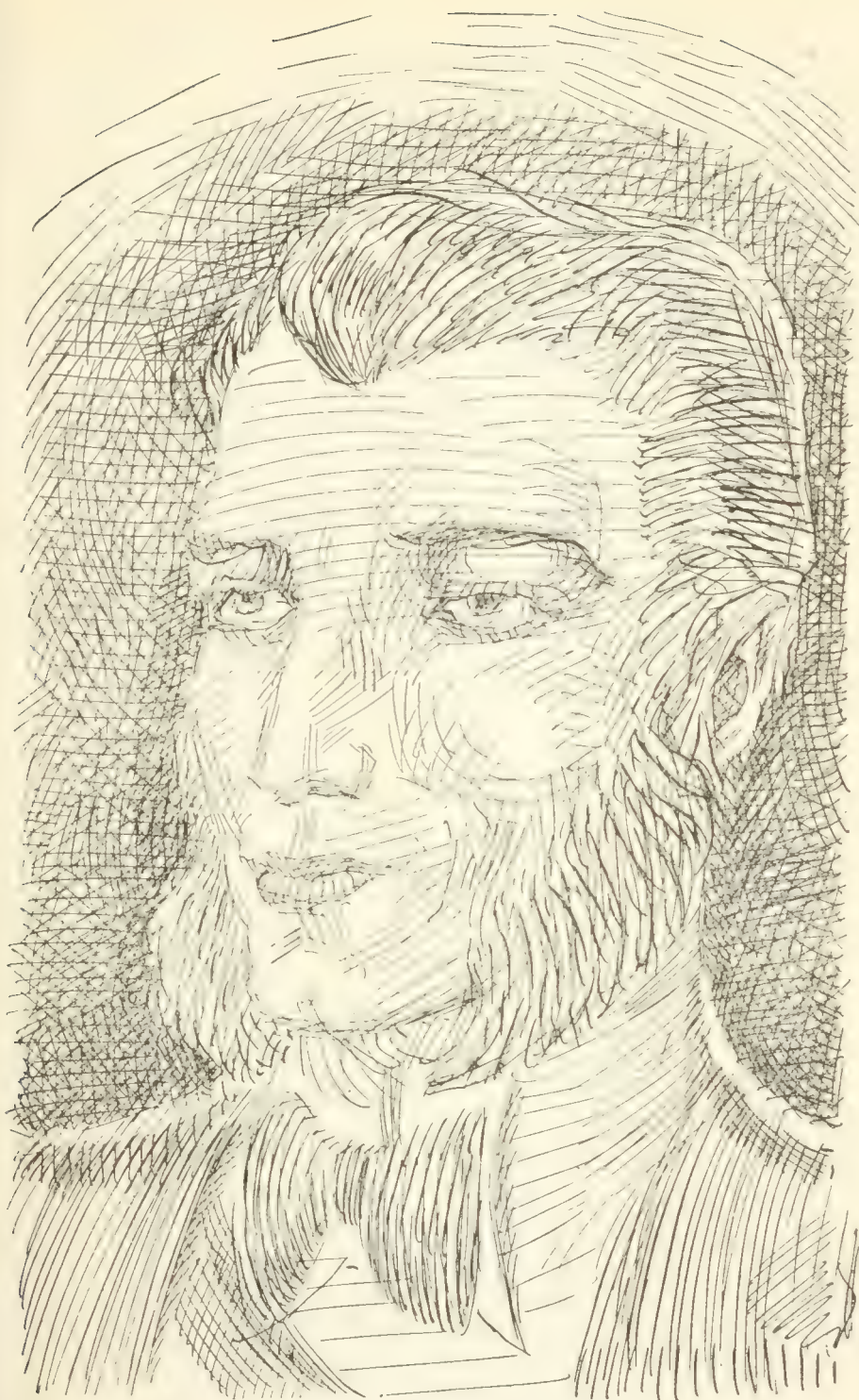
"Ah! I understand," he said, with a laugh. "I think you will find them in the Zoölogical Gardens between four and five. Kitty is learning to skate, you know. I will meet you there myself, and then we can go off to dinner. Now, don't forget our appointment, and don't let me hear that you have suddenly rushed off to your beloved estates in Karasink."

"No, no; I will be there. Till then, *au revoir*!"

CHAPTER V.

WHEN Oblowsky had first asked him the reason of his visit to Moscow, Levine had blushed and purposely avoided answering. He could not well blurt out: "I have come to ask the hand of your sister-in-law," and yet this was the one and only reason of his coming.

Between the two families of Levine and Cherbatzky a close and warm friendship had long existed. Constantin Levine himself had been at the Moscow University with the young Prince Cherbatzky, the brother of Dolly and Kitty, and had been looked upon almost as a member of the family by the whole Cherbatzky household. His own parents were both dead, and his only female relative was a sister much older than himself. His girl acquaintance was practically confined to the three daughters of the Prince and Princess Cherbatzky. His first love had been Dolly, the eldest girl—a romance which was soon cut short by



PRINCE OBLOWSKY

her marriage with Oblowsky. It was then clearly his duty to transfer his affections to the next sister, Nathalie—an arrangement which was, unfortunately, nipped in the bud by her wedding the famous diplomat, Loof. Kitty was then still a child. The young Prince Cherbatzky, who, on leaving the university had entered the navy, was drowned while cruising in the Baltic, and Levine's relations with the family became less intimate. He spent a year in the country upon his own estates, but immediately upon his return to Moscow he visited the Cherbatzky's, and it was soon made clear to him which one of the three daughters was destined to be his fate.

To all outward appearances there could be no possible obstacle to his asking the hand of the young princess in marriage. A man of thirty-two, of good family, possessing a more than handsome fortune—a better match could hardly have been desired. But Levine was too deeply in love. To him, Kitty appeared a superior creature, almost an ideal, far beyond his own unworthy aspirations. After spending two months in Moscow, during which he saw her every day, he suddenly determined that such a marriage was impossible for him, and returned to the country. What was he, he argued, but a farmer?—a farmer on an immense scale, it is true, but still a raiser of cattle and a tiller of the soil. His former friends and school-fellows held high positions in the army, were imperial aids-de-camp, learned and distinguished professors, directors of banks and railroads, or prominent officials like Oblowsky. And yet, in spite of such self-arguing, after a few months spent at his country home, his feelings toward Kitty proved too much for his cold calculations. He felt that he must put it to the test. After all, he could only be refused, and his lot would be none the worse than it was now. He set out for Moscow once more, determined to learn his fate.

CHAPTER VI.

ON leaving Oblowsky, Levine turned his steps toward the house of his half-brother, Serge Ivanitch Kosnichef. He was received by him in the cold but pointedly polite manner which was his chief characteristic.

“I am glad to see you,” said Serge Ivanitch. “Are

you going to stay any length of time? How are your affairs?"

Levine knew that his elder brother took but little interest in agriculture and such questions as the price of wheat and cereals, and that in assuming even a show of interest he was making a large concession to politeness. He himself had no wish to talk upon such topics; he had rather come to speak of his own projects in regard to marriage, and to ask his brother's advice. Now that he was there, however, he felt that he could not turn the conversation on what lay uppermost in his mind.

"Were you aware," said Serge Ivanitch, "that our brother Nicolas is in the city again?"

Nicolas was an elder brother of Levine, and, consequently, a half-brother of Serge Ivanitch. He was an eccentric character, of somewhat doubtful reputation, who had already eaten into the greater part of his fortune, and lived regardless of the thoughts and ensues of the world.

"What do you say?" cried Levine, excitedly. "Nicolas here! How do you know it?"

"Prokofi saw him in the street."

"Here—in Moscow? Where is he?" and Levine rose as if he wished to set out at once in search of him.

"I am sorry I told you," said Serge, shaking his head, as he noticed the other's emotion. "I sent some one to find out where he lived and to give him a letter. Here is his answer."

And Serge held out a paper, which he had taken from his desk. Levine read in a well-known handwriting:

"I humbly beg to be left alone and in peace. It is all that I have to ask of my dear brothers.

"NICOLAS LEVINE."

Constantin remained standing before his brother Serge, with his head bent down.

"It is plain that he wishes to offend me," said Serge; "but that he can not do. I wished from my heart to do all I could for him, should he need assistance."

"Yes, yes," agreed Levine, "I know that, and I at least appreciate your conduct toward him. But I myself must go and see him."

"Do so, if you wish," said Serge; "but I should not advise you to go. It is not that I am afraid of his caus-

ing trouble between you and myself, but simply on your own account. You can do nothing for him or with him."

"Perhaps not; but I shall feel easier in my mind."

"I can not quite understand you," said Serge. "All I know is that since our brother's latest escapade—and you know what that is—I feel more tolerant toward the scamps and sinners of this world."

"Alas! yes, it is frightful!" replied Levine.

Having learned the address of his brother Nicolas from Serge's servant, he left the house, meaning to make the visit at once. He changed his mind, however, and determined to postpone it until he had first decided the question which had brought him to Moscow.

CHAPTER VII.

TOWARD four o'clock Levine dismounted from his *isvostchik* at the gate entrance to the Gardens, and, with beating heart, made his way toward the lake on which the skaters thronged. He knew that *she* was there, for he had seen the Cherbatzky carriage standing at the gate.

As he walked along, he reasoned with himself and his foolish nervousness. "Be calm! Why excite yourself, you imbecile! What is it you wish?" But the more he strove against it, the more nervous he became.

As he came to the edge of the crowded sheet of ice, young Nicolas Cherbatzky, a boy cousin of Kitty's, caught sight of him. "Ah!" he cried, "here he is—the best skater in Russia! Have you been here long? Put on your skates; the ice is in splendid condition!"

"I have no skates," answered Levine; and the next moment, Kitty, her beautiful young face aglow with the healthy exercise, and her golden hair glistening in the bright winter sunlight, glided up and leaned upon her young cousin's arm for support.

"When did you arrive in town?" she asked, as she held out her hand to Levine in cordial greeting.

"A short time ago—yesterday—no, to-day I mean," he stammered in another access of nervousness. "I was coming to call upon you"—and, as he recollected the object of his visit, the blood mounted to his face—"I had no idea that you skated—and so well, too."

She glanced at him, as if trying to discover the cause of his embarrassment.

"Thanks for the compliment," she said. "Coming from such a skater as yourself, it is doubly precious;" and she brushed away, with her little glove of fur, some particles of ice which had gathered on her muff.

"I used to be passionately fond of it," he said.

"Then why not put on some skates and let us skate together?"

"I will, indeed, at once," he said, and rushed off, delighted, to procure a pair.

He could hardly restrain his impatience while the skates were being fixed to his feet. The prospect of skating with *her* was almost too much for him.

Soon he was gliding on the ice toward Kitty, who greeted him with a smile. She gave him her hand, and together they skated side by side, the grasp of her little fingers growing stronger as their pace increased.

"I shall learn quickly with you," she said. "I don't know why, but you seem to give me confidence, which is everything when one is learning.

"And you, too, give me confidence," he said; and then stopped short as he noticed a slight cloud pass over her face, and the smile fade from her eyes. Her forehead wrinkled in a little frown.

"What is the matter?" he said; "though, perhaps, I have no right to ask."

"Why not?" she replied in a cold tone; and then, suddenly: "But you have not seen Mademoiselle Linon yet;" and she led him toward the elderly governess, who sat patiently and good-naturedly watching her young charge from the bank.

The good soul received Levine with a friendly smile and warm welcome.

"Are we not growing?" she asked, nodding her head toward Kitty. "Do you remember how we used to call her the Tiny Bear of the old nursery story?"

Levine laughed as his memory traveled back to the old days of ten years before.

"Now go on with your skating," she added. "Don't you think our Kitty is learning quickly?"

When Levine rejoined her, he noticed that the cloud had



passed from Kitty's face. She led the conversation to his own life and doings.

"Do you not grow tired of the country?" she asked.

"No, I am too busy," he answered, in the calm tone which he had resolved to assume.

"And for how long are you going to stay here?"

"I have no idea—not the least."

"No idea? Is not that rather strange?" said the girl.

"No; for it depends entirely upon you!"

The moment the words had left his mouth, he could have bitten out his tongue.

Kitty said nothing, but turned and skated rapidly toward the little club-house, for the purpose of taking off her skates.

"Is it my own fault?" she thought to herself. "Have I encouraged him? I know that I do not love him, but still I always enjoy being with him. He is so good and kind. But why—why did he say that?"

Levine, seeing that Kitty had now joined her mother, removed his own skates and hurried toward them.

"I am very glad to see you," said the princess. "We still receive, you know, on Thursdays."

"This evening, perhaps?" he asked.

"We shall be charmed to see you," she answered, coldly.

Her mother's tone distressed Kitty somewhat, for she felt sure Levine must notice it. She turned toward him with a bright smile: "*Au revoir*, then!" she cried.

As the carriage containing the ladies drove away, Levine turned and caught sight of Stépane entering the Gardens. The sound of Kitty's voice and her last words—" *Au revoir* "—were in his ears as he joined his friend.

"If you are ready, we will go at once," said Stépane. "I am glad you have kept your *isvostchik*, for I sent my carriage home."

During the drive few words passed between them. Levine's thoughts were full of Kitty. At moments he would recall her manner toward him after his incautious speech, and a feeling of deep depression came over him. Then, the next instant, he would see again the bright look she gave him on parting, and hear again the words which seemed to bring him hope—" *Au revoir* !"

CHAPTER VIII.

TOWARD the end of the dinner at which Levine was entertained by Stépane, the two friends felt that the time had come for an interchange of the thoughts with which they were both oppressed.

"And now," said Stépane, as he lighted a cigar and settled back in his seat, "tell me what has brought you to Moscow."

"Have you not already guessed?" asked Levine, looking fixedly at him.

"I have guessed it, certainly; but it was not for me to be the first to speak."

"Well, and what have you to say?" asked Levine, with a slight tremble in his voice. "What is your own opinion?"

Stépane slowly emptied his glass, and, returning the other's look, said:

"Simply that there is nothing I would desire more—absolutely nothing."

"But are you sure we are alluding to the same thing?" said Levine, nervously. "Do you think it could possibly be?"

"Why not?"

"Tell me frankly. Say everything that is in your thoughts. Am I not sure to be refused?"

"Why should you be?" said Stépane, unable to repress a smile at his friend's emotion.

"It would be terrible—both for me and for her."

"Oh, I see nothing terrible about it, so far as she is concerned. A young girl should be—and generally is—flattered at being asked in marriage."

"Ordinary girls, perhaps; but not she."

Stépane again smiled. He knew well that in Levine's mind all the women in the world were practically of another planet to that on which Kitty had been born.

"To me," continued Levine, "it is simply a question of life or death. I have never spoken of it, nor could I ever speak of it to any one save yourself. We are, I know, two men of totally different character and nature. It is that,



LEVINE

I think, which binds us together. In Heaven's name, be honest and sincere with me."

"I will tell you not only what I myself think," said Stépane, "but I will tell you more. My wife, who, I think you will own, is an exceptional woman"—and as he thought of their present relations, he could not keep back a sigh—"my wife has the gift of what I will call 'second sight.' She sees all that is passing in the hearts of others, and more especially where love and marriage are concerned. I could tell you many instances where her prognostications have turned out correct against the opinion of every one else. Well, my wife is on your side."

"What do you mean?"

"I mean that not only does she herself esteem you most highly, but she is positive that Kitty will one day be your wife."

When he heard these words, Levine's face suddenly brightened.

"She said that?" he cried. "I always looked upon your wife as an angel. It is enough for me," he added, rising from the table.

"Sit down and calm yourself," said Stépane; but it was not until he had paced excitedly up and down the little room several times that Levine could sufficiently control his feelings.

"You must understand," he exclaimed, "that it is almost more than love that I feel for her. Should the happiness I have dared to dream of come to me, it would be beyond mere human happiness. My whole existence is wrapped up in this. I must decide it, one way or the other."

He drained the glass of wine before him, and for some moments there was silence between the two friends.

"There is one other thing I must tell you," said Stépane, at length. "Do you know Wronsky?"

"No. Why?"

"He is your rival."

"Who is this Wronsky?" asked Levine, over whose face the shadow had suddenly fallen again.

"He is a son of Count Cyrille Wronsky, and one of the best known among the *jeunesse dorée* of St. Petersburg. I knew him at Iver, when I was in the service. His regiment was also stationed there. He is immensely rich,

good-looking, aid-de-camp to the emperor, well connected, and, above all, a good fellow. From what I could see, he is even more, for he is exceptionally well educated and clever. In fact, he is a man who is bound to make his mark."

Levine's face grew dark, and he remained perfectly silent.

"He appeared on the scene shortly after you last left here," continued the other. "They say he is most decidedly *épris* with Kitty, and her mother, you know—"

"Pardon me," interrupted Levine, "but I know nothing." At that moment the thought of his brother Nicolas flashed across his mind.

"Well," said Stépane, laying a friendly hand upon the other's arm, "I have told you all I know, and I can only repeat that, in spite of everything, the chances seem to me to be in your favor."

Levine grew pale, and leaned back in his chair.

"Why," he asked, "do you never come to stay with me and have some shooting or hunting? Come this spring."

In his heart he was sorry now that he had brought about the conversation with Stépane. His very soul was now up in arms at the thought of his rival, this well-favored young officer from St. Petersburg. Stépane could easily read what was passing in his mind, and he made haste to answer:

"I will come to you some of these days; but, my friend, I will only now remind you that this world circles around, and is controlled by, the women. My own trouble is serious—very serious—and caused entirely by women. It is now my turn to ask you to give your advice, freely and frankly," he added, lighting a fresh cigar.

"Concerning what?"

"This—supposing you were married, that you dearly loved your wife, and yet became entangled with some other woman."

"Excuse me; I can not understand such a supposition. To me it is as if, on leaving this dinner-table, I stopped at the first baker's shop and stole a loaf of bread from his counter."

A bright gleam of fun flashed across Stépane's eyes.

"Well, and why not? It is very hard sometimes, you know, to resist the enticing odor of a freshly baked loaf."

Levine took no notice of the pleasantry.

"Joking apart," continued Stépane, "supposing that a charming, modest, and lovable woman had sacrificed everything for you; that without you she would be in poverty and cut off from the world, should you, now that the mischief is done, abandon her? Should you not, even if it were to cost your own family some pain and grief, have some pity for her, soften the separation, and think for a moment of *her* future?"

"Pardon me once more; but, as you are well aware, for me the world contains only two classes of women, or, rather, it contains women and—well, I need not use the word. I have never met, nor do I believe in, the repentant Magdalen. To me a fallen woman is, and will always be, repugnant."

"And the Saviour—what was His thought?"

"Leave that argument alone. He would never have spoken the words He did had He known the mischief they would do. I repeat, I have the same disgust for fallen women that you probably have for, let us say, spiders. There is no more need for you to study and analyze the habits and doings of these loathly insects than there is for me to study those other creatures."

"You are begging the question. What should one do? That is what I asked."

"One should *not* steal the loaf of fresh bread."

Stépane commenced to laugh.

"You moralist! You do not understand the situation. Here are two women: the one lays claim to her rights, which consist of the love you can no longer give her; the other, sacrifices everything, and asks for nothing in return. What should one do in such a case? Is it not a terrible drama?"

"If I must say what I really think, I will tell you that I have no belief in this drama. To my mind, love, the two different loves of which, you remember, Plato speaks in his 'Banquet,' serve as a touchstone for men. Some understand but one of these two loves, others are ignorant even of that. Those who do not comprehend platonic love have no excuse for speaking of a 'drama.' In platonic love all is clear and pure, because—" He stopped as he suddenly remembered his own transgressions and inward struggles; then, as if restraining himself, he added: "After all,

perhaps you are right. As for me, I know nothing about it, absolutely nothing."

"You are a man of the most perfect consistency," said Stépane. "It is at once your best quality and your worst fault. You would have it that love and conjugal life have but the one end in common."

Levine made no response; it is doubtful if he heard the other's words; his thoughts were all turned upon what touched himself.

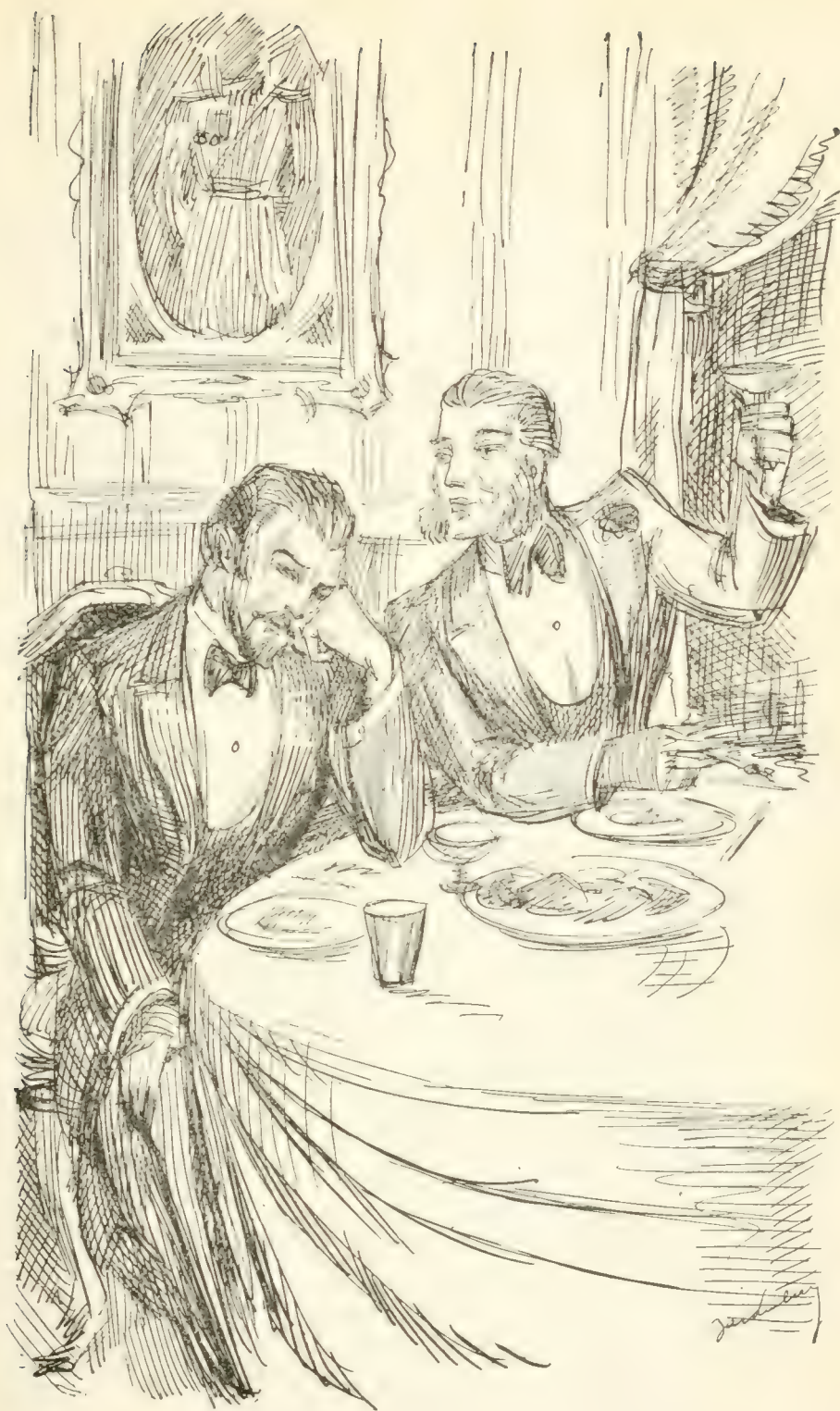
The feeling came to both men that, so far from the dinner having united them in closer friendship, it had, in some way, brought about a breach between them. Each thought of his own cares and gave no thought to the troubles of his friend. The strain was relieved by Stépane, who called for the bill, and, passing into the public room, was soon engaged in light and cheerful conversation with some friend he chanced to see. Levine returned to his own rooms in order to dress before repairing to the Cherbatzky mansion to learn his fate.

CHAPTER IX.

THE Princess Kitty Cherbatzky had now passed her eighteenth birthday. The present winter was her first season in the world of society, and the admiration she had already met with even surpassed what had fallen to the lot of her two elder sisters. Two suitors for her hand she could at least lay claim to—Levine, and, after his departure from Moscow, the young Count Wronsky.

Levine's frequent visits and his evident love for their daughter had been the subject of many serious conversations between the prince and princess. The former was altogether on his side, and declared that he wished no better match for Kitty. The princess held other views. Kitty, she said, was yet too young to think of marriage, nor, to her mind, were Levine's attentions serious. These were merely her words; in her inmost heart she was counting upon a more brilliant alliance. Needless to say, when the young man had left Moscow she was much elated.

"You see, I was right in my estimate of him," she said, with an air of satisfaction to her husband; and her contentment was increased when Wronsky appeared upon the scene as an evident lover.



She had never understood Levine's character; his brusqueness and occasional awkwardness she attributed to pride and what she called the savage life of the country, among his beasts and peasants. During the six weeks in which he had almost daily visited the house, his manner, she maintained, was that of a man who was hesitating, observing, and constantly asking himself whether the honor he was about to confer upon the girl and her family was not too great.

Wronsky, on the other hand, exactly suited her requirements. He was rich, intelligent, and of excellent birth; a brilliant career, either at court or in the army, awaited him, and, above all, he was most charming. What better could she ask for her daughter? And yet, at times, throughout the winter, she was tormented by bitter doubts and misgivings.

After dinner, on the evening of Levine's return to Moscow, Kitty mounted to her room to prepare her toilet for the evening. As she descended to the salon, a servant announced:

"Constantin-Dmitrievitch Levine!"

Her mother was still in her own apartments, and the prince in his study.

"He has come," thought Kitty, and the blood coursed through her veins. She knew, without a doubt, that the object of Constantin's visit was to declare himself. At last the situation was clear to her—it would be necessary for her to wound a man whom she liked, and to wound him cruelly. But there was no other course open; it must be done.

"Must I see him alone?" she thought to herself, "and must I tell him what is not true—that I do not like him? What shall I say? I can not tell him that I love another!"

As he entered the room, looking tall, strong, and manly in spite of his evident timidity, she could not help throwing a glance at him as if to implore his protection.

"I have come rather too early," he said, looking around the empty room.

"Oh, no," said Kitty, seating herself near a table.

"It is precisely what I was hoping for, to find you alone," he continued, still standing before her.

"My mother will be here presently. She was rather fatigued this evening."

Levine turned a glance upon her which made her blush and tremble. "I told you," he said, "this afternoon, that I did not know how long I should remain here—that it depended upon yourself."

Kitty lowered her head; there was nothing she could say.

"Yes," he continued, "it depends upon you. What I came here for was—was to ask you to be my wife!"

He said no more, but stood and gazed at her.

Kitty did not raise her head; she could hardly breathe; a glow of happiness filled her heart. She had not thought that a declaration from him could affect her thus. But the impression lasted for a moment only. She remembered Wronsky, and, raising her eyes, in which there was a look of tearful sincerity, to Levine's face, she answered, quickly and in a low tone:

"It can not be—forgive me."

A moment before she had been near him, and, as he felt, necessary to his very life; now she was far from him, and they were worse than strangers.

"It could not have been otherwise," he said, and, bowing to her, was about to leave the room.

CHAPTER X.

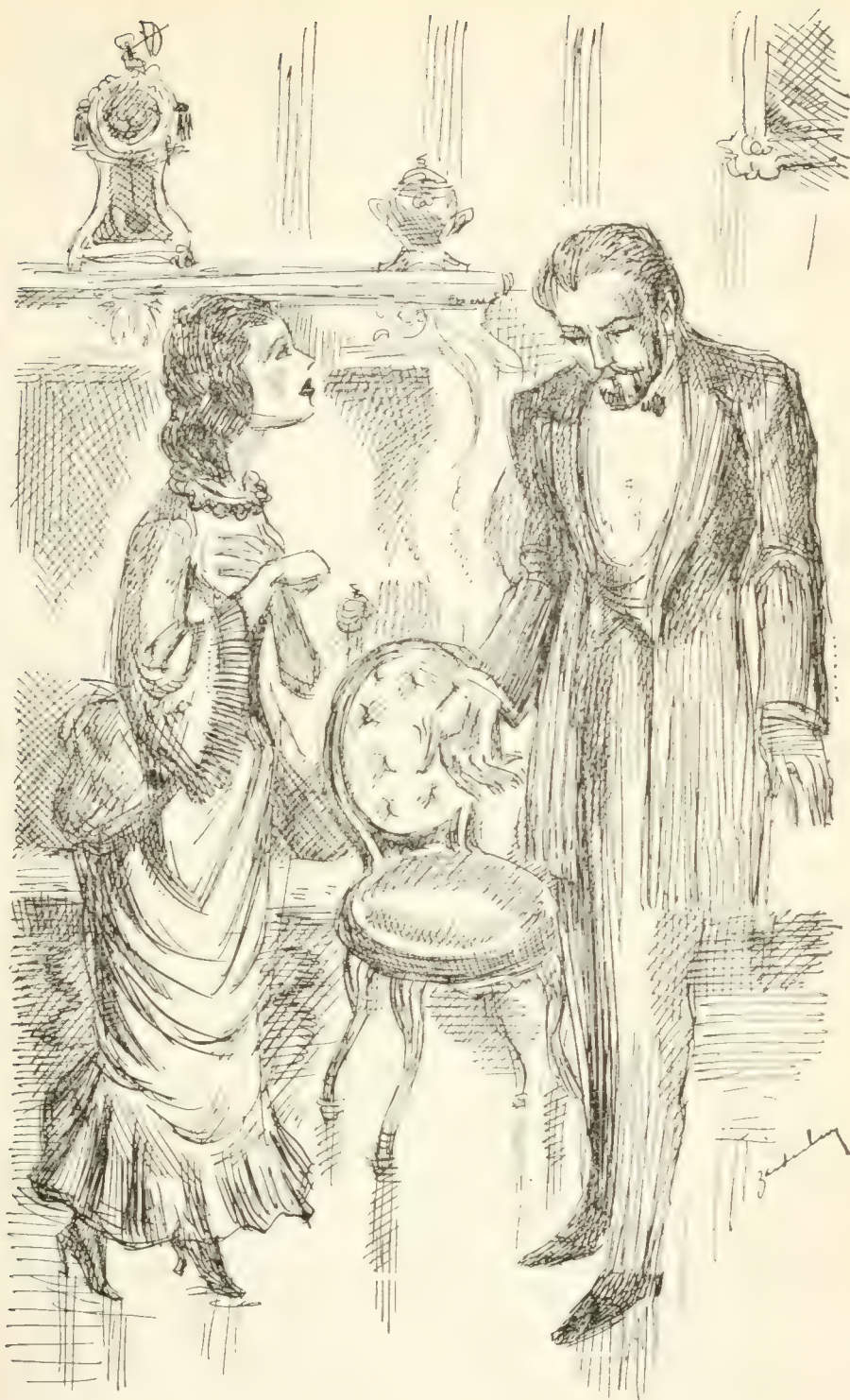
AT that moment the princess entered the room. A look of fear passed across her face as she saw the two young people alone and evidently moved. Levine bowed, without speaking. Kitty did not raise her eyes.

"Thank God, she has refused him!" thought the mother, and her face was wreathed in smiles.

She sat down by Levine and questioned him about the country, and before many minutes had elapsed the Countess Nordstone was announced.

The countess was a friend of Kitty's, a few months married, a small, thin-featured, nervous little woman, whose one aim now was to see her young friend also enter the conjugal estate. Wronsky was her favorite. Levine she had never liked; and her greatest pleasure, when they met, was to exercise all her arts in teasing and mocking him.

"I know he looks down upon me from the height of his wonderful cleverness," she would say of him. "I am far beneath his condescension, and I am glad of it."



She was partially right, for Levine did actually dislike and distrust her. Her shallowness and disdainful indifference toward all things serious repelled him. She at once attacked him.

"Ah, Constantin-Dmitrich! So you have returned to this wicked Babylon of ours"—he had once incautiously used the word when speaking of life in Moscow. "Has Babylon been converted, or is it you that are corrupted?" she added, with a mocking smile and a glance at Kitty.

"I am flattered, countess, that you should have treasured up my words," answered Levine. "They must certainly have impressed you."

"Yes, indeed, I take note of everything. Well, Kitty, have you skated to-day?" and she began to talk with her friend.

Left momentarily to himself, Levine would have escaped; but the princess, noticing it, turned to him and asked:

"How long do you remain in Moscow? Are you not a justice of the peace in your own district? Your duties, I suppose, forbid a long absence?"

"No, princess; I resigned a short time ago. I shall be here for some days."

As he spoke, several other visitors entered the salon, among them a young officer.

"This must be Wronsky," Levine said to himself, and quickly looked at Kitty. In a moment he understood that she was in love as surely as if she herself had told it. Levine was not one of those men unable to do justice to the claims, physical or otherwise, of a rival. He owned at once to himself that in appearance Wronsky was all that a woman could desire. Tall, well-proportioned, with handsome, sunburned face, he looked, as he stood there in his uniform, a gallant soldier, from his closely cut dark hair downward to his feet. As he greeted Kitty in her turn, Levine thought he could detect an expression of happiness and triumph in the young soldier's face.

"Let me introduce you," said the princess, bringing the two men together. "Constantin-Dmitrich Levine—the Count Alexis-Kirilovitch Wronsky."

They greeted each other cordially.

"I had hoped to have met you earlier in the winter," said Wronsky, "but you left suddenly for the country."

"Constantin-Dmitrich distrusts and flies from the city

and its inhabitants," put in the Countess Nordstone, who was standing near.

Wronsky looked from one to the other, and smiled.

"Then you always live in the country?" he asked. "Is it not rather dull in winter time?"

"Not when one is occupied," answered Levine, curtly. "And even in town it is possible to be dull."

"That is true," said Wronsky; "and, now that I think of it, I never longed for the country—the real Russian country, I mean—so much as during one winter I spent with my mother at Nice. And Nice, you know, can not be accused of being a dull place."

And so the conversation went on, never flagging for an instant, and rendering it impossible for poor Levine to make his adieus and escape.

After some time the prince came in, and, having saluted the ladies present, turned to Levine.

"Ah!" he cried in a warm and friendly tone, "I did not know that you were here. When did you come? I am more than glad to see you."

He held his arm and talked to him, taking no notice of Wronsky, who stood quietly by.

Kitty noticed everything, and thought how hard her father's cordial greeting must be to Levine after her own rejection of him. Wronsky at last approached her and commenced to talk of a ball which was to be given at a great house during the ensuing week.

"I hope you will be there," Levine heard him say to her.

As soon as the prince released him, Levine saw that the moment had come when he might make his adieus. His last impression, as he left the house, was of Kitty's smiling and happy face as she chatted with Wronsky about the coming ball.

CHAPTER XI.

WRONSKY had never known the charms and advantages of domestic life. His mother, a woman of the world, whose youth had been a brilliant one, had, during her married life, and, to a greater degree, during her widowhood, made her name notorious by the frequency of her *affaires*. His father had died soon after the young count's birth, whose

education had been intrusted to a succession of governors and tutors.

On finishing, with much distinction, his military studies, he had taken his place as a household officer among the highest in St. Petersburg. His life there was a constant round of official duties and social gayeties. It was at Moscow that, for the first time, he experienced the influence of true womanly society, and found himself in frequent and familiar contact with a young, charming, and innocent girl. The contrast between his life there, and the false, luxurious existence of St. Petersburg, delighted him. He saw Kitty nearly every day, and there gradually grew to exist between them an indefinable yet very certain tie. In his own mind, however, the idea of marriage had never entered; her society was simply a new pleasure to him, and one which he saw no harm in enjoying as such, and nothing more. Had he been told that, by not announcing himself, he was causing Kitty much grief, he would have disbelieved the words. Why should marriage take the place of and spoil this delightful intimacy? To him the life of a married man was something strange, almost ridiculous.

Although he was unaware of what was expected of him by the Cherbatzky family, Wronsky left the house on this particular evening conscious that the tie between himself and Kitty had been drawn closer. As he thought of her, her innocence and purity, a glow of satisfaction pervaded him, and he felt that his intercourse with her made of himself a better man. As proof of this, he found it difficult to decide where and in pursuit of what pleasure and excitement he should finish the evening. At the club, with a game of cards and a friendly bottle of champagne? No. At the Château des Heurs, where he was sure of finding Oblowsky watching the deviltries of the can-can? No; the idea, as he thought of the house he had just left, was distasteful to him. He would return quietly to his own hotel. And so, after enjoying as good a supper as Dussaux could provide, he retired to his own room, and was soon enjoying the sleep of a young and healthy man to whom care and trouble are unknown names.

CHAPTER XII.

THE next morning, toward eleven o'clock, Wronsky betook himself to the railway-station to meet the train by which his mother was to arrive. Upon the platform the first person he saw was Oblowsky, who was there for the similar purpose of meeting his sister Anna.

"What brings you here?" he asked, as they greeted each other.

"To meet a very charming woman."

"Ah! indeed."

"*Honni soit qui mal y pense!* The charming woman is my sister Anna—Madame Karénine—you know her, I suppose?"

"I think I have met her," said Wronsky, somewhat doubtfully. The name of Karénine seemed to recall to him some tiresome and affected person.

"At least you know my famous brother-in-law, Alexis Alexandrovitch? He is known the world over."

"Yes, by reputation and by sight only. These wise and scientific men are far above poor me."

In addition to the pleasure which all his friends and acquaintances found in Stépane's society, Wronsky, just at present, felt additionally attracted to him, through his connection with the Cherbatzkys. He took his arm, and they strolled together along the platform.

"Tell me," said Stépane, "did you meet my friend Levine last night?"

"Yes; but he left the house quite early."

"He is a good fellow, is he not?" continued Stépane.

"Well," answered Wronsky, "I don't know why it is so, but all Moscow people—present company, of course, excepted—seem to me to be over-impressed with a sense of their own importance—rather overbearing, in fact, and as if they are always anxious to teach you something."

"Perhaps there is some truth in your accusation," said Stépane, with a laugh. "But I think in this case you are a little unjust. Levine is a very nervous man, at times possibly rather disagreeable in his manner; but, on the other hand, no one can be more charming than he when he wishes. Just at present," he added, significantly, "there

are reasons why he should be either very happy or intensely unhappy."

"You mean," said the other, quickly, "that he has proposed for your sister-in-law?"

"It is probable," answered Stépane; "he has been in love with her for a long time."

"Ah!" said Wronsky, reflectively, quickening his pace. "I thought so; but here is the train coming in."

The train steamed slowly up to the platform, and disgorged its load of travelers. The conductor approached the young men. "The Countess Wronsky is in that carriage," he said, pointing it out.

The words recalled Wronsky to himself, and he hastily thought of the coming meeting with his mother. Though on the best of terms with her, he had neither love nor any great respect for his mother. Perhaps on this account, his outward manner and behavior to her, when they were together, were marked by a consideration and respect almost exaggerated in degree.

Wronsky followed the conductor. As he reached the compartment where his mother was, he was forced to draw aside and leave a clear passage for a lady, who at that moment descended from it. For some reason, not on account of her beauty, or the grace and elegance of her movements, he turned his head and met her eyes—beautiful gray eyes—in whose depths he seemed to see a friendly and pleased look. The interchange of glance was but for an instant, and the next moment Wronsky had entered the compartment. His mother, an elderly woman, still preserving traces of great beauty, and dressed in the very height of fashion, rose from her seat, handed her traveling-bag to the maid who accompanied her, and extended her hand toward her son.

"You received my telegram?" she asked. "You are well, I hope?"

He sat down by her side and was questioning her about her journey, when the lady whom he had met at the carriage door entered it again.

"Have you found your brother?" asked Madame Wronsky.

At once Wronsky recognized Madame Karénine.

"Your brother is on the platform," he said, rising from his seat. "Will you pardon me, madame, for not having

recognized you. I have so seldom had the honor of meeting you."

"Certainly," she answered, with a pleasant smile. "I knew you at once, though, for your mother has spoken to me so much about you during our journey. But where is my brother?"

Wronsky jumped from the carriage, and called to him across the crowd.

At the moment Madame Karénine herself caught sight of Stépane, and leaving the carriage, walked quickly to him, and passing her arm around his neck, gave him a warm and loving embrace.

Wronsky stood and watched them, a little smile upon his lips.

"Well, countess," said Madame Karénine, returning once more to the carriage for her traveling articles, "you have found your son, and I, my brother. I have inflicted all my own history upon you, during the journey, and have nothing else to say but to ask forgiveness."

"Your company and conversation, my dear, have been most charming. As for your little boy at home, don't be uneasy about him. It is impossible but that you must sometimes be separated. Anna Arcadieвна," explained the countess to her son, "has a little boy eight years of age. She has never left him before, and is fretting about him."

"We have both been talking about our sons," said Madame Karénine, her face lighting up with her strange, caressing smile. "I of my little fellow, and the countess of you."

"The latter a most tiresome topic, I should think," said Wronsky, with a laugh.

They left the carriage and stood for a moment on the platform. Suddenly there was a commotion, and a crowd of people were seen to rush toward the end of the train. Some accident, it was evident, had occurred. Wronsky and Stépane made inquiries as to what had happened. An unfortunate man, not hearing, for some reason or another, the approach of an engine, had been struck down upon the rails and killed.

Stépane and Wronsky were among those who viewed the body. When they returned: "It was a frightful sight,"

said the former to the ladies. "If you could only have seen it, Anna—it was horrible!"

Wronsky was silent, his handsome face serious, but absolutely unmoved.

"And his wife was there," continued Stépane. "She threw herself upon the body, and would not let them raise her. There were some who knew him, and said that he leaves a large family quite unprovided for."

"Could not something be done for the poor woman?" asked Madame Karénine in an agitated tone.

Wronsky turned and looked at her for an instant.

"I will return in a moment," he said to his mother, and walked rapidly away.

When, after some minutes, he rejoined them, Stépane was discussing the merits of a new singer with the countess, who was evidently impatient to be gone.

"Let us go," said Wronsky, and walked in front with his mother, while Madame Karénine and her brother followed. The station-master came running up. "I am told," he said to Wronsky, "that you have left two hundred roubles with my deputy. Will you tell me, monsieur, how you wish the money to be used?"

"It is for the widow, of course," said Wronsky, with an impatient gesture. "How can you ask such a question?"

"Did you do that?" cried Stépane, from behind, and, as he pressed his sister's arm, he said in a low tone: "Is he not a good fellow?"

As he and Anna reached the exit from the station, the Wronskys' carriage was driving away. Small groups of persons were talking of the accident on all sides. When Madame Karénine had entered their carriage, her brother noticed that her lips were trembling, and that it was with difficulty she kept back the tears.

"What is the matter, Anna?" he asked, as they drove away.

"It is a bad omen," she said, "just upon my arrival."

"Nonsense!" replied her brother. "You are here yourself, safe and sound. You can not tell what hopes I have built upon your visit."

"Have you known Wronsky for long?" she asked.

"Yes; we are in hopes of a match between him and Kitty, you know."

"Indeed?" said Anna, quietly. "Now, let us talk

about yourself," she added, as if trying to shake off her thoughts. "I received your letter, and here I am."

"Yes, as I tell you, my whole hope is in you."

"Tell me everything, then."

Stépane commenced the story of his domestic trouble. When they arrived at the house, he escorted her to the door, pressed her hand, and, with a sigh, returned to his official duties.

CHAPTER XIII.

WHEN Anna entered the house, Dolly was seated in her little salon reading in French with her little son, a well-grown boy with a mass of golden hair, his features the very image of his father's.

In her mind she was ill at ease. Although she had told her husband that his sister's visit would make no difference to herself, she was none the less nervous as to how she should receive her. She could not forget that Anna was one of the leaders of society in St. Petersburg, the wife of a high official.

"After all," she thought, "Anna is not to blame. She and I have always been good friends. Why should I not receive her—provided she does not interfere in this trouble or try to console me? Resignation and Christian consolation, I know what it all means!"

Every minute she had been expecting the arrival of her sister-in-law, and following the slowly moving hands of the little clock. So absorbed did she become in her thoughts, that she did not hear the ringing of the bell when Anna actually did arrive, and her first intimation was the opening of her boudoir door.

"You have arrived already?" she cried, advancing toward Anna, and embracing her.

"Dolly, I am so glad to see you again!"

"And I, too, am very glad," said Dolly, with a poor attempt to smile, seeking to read in the other's face how much she already knew. "She knows everything," was her thought, as she remarked the compassionate look on Anna's face.

"Come," she added, aloud; "let me take you to your room."

She strove to defer the inevitable moment of explanation.



"And is this Grisha?" exclaimed Anna, kissing the child, but keeping her eyes bent upon Dolly. "What a big lad he has grown!" Then she added, with a little blush: "Won't you let me rest here a little?"

She removed her cloak and hat, and gave some little touches to her glorious black hair.

"How well and happy you look!" said Dolly, half enviously.

"I? Yes, indeed, I am very well—and here is Tania"—as the little girl came running into the room—"just the same age as my own little Serge. You must show me all the children," she added, evidently remembering every little detail concerning them.

Dolly was touched. "Yes, you shall see them; but Wasia, I am afraid, is asleep."

Having visited the nursery, they returned to the salon, where coffee was served.

"Dolly," said Anna, suddenly, "he has told me everything."

Dolly looked at her coldly, waiting for the expected platitudes and words of sympathy, but none came.

"Dolly, my dear, I do not wish to defend him, nor to try and console you. It is impossible; but, dear, I am grieved, grieved to the bottom of my heart."

The tears stood in her eyes. She moved her seat and sat down beside her sister-in-law, with one arm about her waist. Dolly did not repulse her.

"No one could console me," she said. "Everything is over for me."

Anna carried the thin little hand to her lips, and gently kissed it. "But, Dolly, what is to be done? How shall we get away from this dreadful state of affairs?"

"All is over; there is nothing left for me to do," answered Dolly. "What I feel most is that I am bound to him by our children. I can not leave them, nor can I live with him. The very sight of him is torture to me!"

"Dolly, dear, he, as I tell you, has spoken; now let me hear all you have to say. Tell me everything." And Dolly could see that her eyes were full of affection and true sympathy.

"Very well; but I must tell you all, from the very beginning. You know all about my marriage. My mother's education had left me as innocent and ignorant on some

matters as a child. I knew nothing of the world. They say that, as a rule, husbands tell their whole past to their wives; but Stiva"—the familiar name had passed her lips despite herself—"Stépane Archadieitch, I mean—told me nothing. You may not believe it, but at the time I did not suppose he had ever paid attention to another woman than myself. For eight years this belief stayed with me. Not only was I unsuspecting of infidelity, but I did not even think such a thing was possible. With such ideas, you can imagine what it was for me to learn of this horror, this baseness. Confident in my own happiness," continued Dolly, striving to keep back her sobs, "to receive a letter which he had written—a letter from him to his mistress, the governess of my little children! It was too cruel."

She hid her face for some moments in her handkerchief.

"I might perhaps have understood a sudden temptation," she continued; "but this deceit, this constant scheming to deceive me—and for whom! It is awful! You can not understand it!"

"Ah! yes, my poor Dolly, I can understand it," said Anna, pressing her hand. "And he, dear, has suffered too. He is full of remorse. I could not look at him without feeling a great pity for him. He has always been proud; now he is humiliated. What touched me most"—Anna surely knew what would most touch the wife and mother—"was his suffering on the children's account, and that he feels that he has wounded, almost killed, you whom he loves—yes, loves more than all the world," she added, quickly, as Dolly would have interrupted her. "'She will never forgive me—never!' he is constantly saying."

Dolly listened attentively, not looking at her sister-in-law.

"I can understand that he suffers," she said. "It is only right that the guilty should suffer more than the innocent. But how can I forgive him? How can I be his wife after—after *her*? Life with him would hereafter be as great a torture as my love was formerly a happiness." Her voice was choked by her sobs. When she could speak again, her thoughts centered on what seemed to her the greatest injury: "She is young—and handsome. By whom have my looks and my youth been sacrificed? By

him and by his children! I have served my turn—all that is good in me has been used up in his service. Now, a creature, fresher and younger than I, is more agreeable to him. They have discussed me together. Worse than that, they have passed me over in contemptuous silence!" and her looks were alive with jealousy. "What can he say to me now? How could I believe anything he said? No, all is over. Listen! When you came, I was trying to teach Grisha his lessons. Formerly this was my greatest pleasure; now it is a torment! Why should I give myself this care? Why have I any children? In place of the love and tenderness I used to have, there is now hatred—yes, hatred! I could kill him, and—"

"Dolly, dear, I can understand all that; but do not needlessly torture yourself. You are too agitated, too much hurt to see things in their proper light."

Dolly grew calmer, and for some moments both were silent.

"What am I to do?" at last she said. "Think, Anna, and advise me. I can see no way out of it."

Nor, indeed, could Anna; but her heart responded to every word, to every sad look of her sister-in-law.

"This is what I think," she said: "I am his sister, and I know his character so well. He is easily tempted, and he forgets himself as quickly as he afterward repents. As a matter of fact, he hardly realizes what he has done. When he spoke to me, I will frankly own that I did not comprehend the extent of the evil. I saw only one thing—the disruption of your family—and that grieved me sorely. Now that I have had this talk with you, woman to woman, I see things differently. I can not tell you how your suffering pains me. But, Dolly, dear, there is one point on which I am still ignorant, and that is, the extent of your love for him. Do you love him enough to forgive him? If you do, then pardon him."

"No," commenced Dolly; but Anna interrupted her.

"I know the world better than you, dear; and I know the characters of such men as Stiva. You say that he and she have talked together of you. Do not believe it. Such men as he can prove unfaithful, but their wives and their domestic life always remain as something sacred. Between such women as this one and their own family they draw a

line of demarkation which is never passed. Why this should be I do not know, but so it is."

"But he has loved her, and—and caressed her."

"Listen, Dolly. I saw Stiva when he first fell in love with you. I remember how he used to speak to me of you, and how his admiration for you grew from day to day. Among ourselves it was a joke to hear him say on every possible occasion, 'Dolly is such a wonderful woman!' As such, you will always remain to him. This has only been a chance entanglement."

"But if it should be renewed?"

"That is impossible."

"Would you yourself have forgiven him?"

"That I do not know, and therefore can not say. 'Yes,' she added, after a moment's pause, as if she had weighed the question—"yes, I would. I might not, perhaps, feel the same toward him, but I should forgive him, and to such an extent that the past would be forgotten."

"That," said Dolly, quickly, "would be a matter of course, or the forgiveness would be worth nothing. Come," she said, rising from her seat; "let me show you your room," and she linked her arm in that of her sister-in-law. "Dear Anna," she said, "how glad I am that you came to me. I suffer less, far less, now."

CHAPTER XIV.

ANNA passed the whole day in her brother's house, receiving none of the visitors who called on hearing of her arrival in Moscow. The morning was spent with Dolly and her children. To Stépane she sent a note, bidding him dine at the house. "Come," she wrote; "I trust matters will go well."

He followed her advice and dined at home. The conversation at the table was general, and Dolly's manner, though cold, was in marked contrast with her previous behavior since the discovery of her wrong.

After dinner, Kitty arrived. She had but a slight acquaintance with Anna, and was astonished that this great lady from St. Petersburg should be received so quietly and unceremoniously. She felt attracted toward her, and Anna, on her part, was charmed with Kitty's youth and beauty, and treated her as an elder woman treats a young

one, whom she is prepared to esteem and love. Her manner was more like that of a girl of twenty than a woman and the mother of a family. Simple and sincere as she was, she seemed to others a woman far superior to most of those with whom they came in contact. When dinner was over, Anna approached her brother, who was smoking his cigar. Dolly had retired to her own room.

"Stiva," said Anna, pointing to the door through which the wife had gone, "go to her, and may Heaven help you!"

He understood, and, throwing away his cigar, followed his wife.

Anna sat down, surrounded by the children, who by this time were her devoted admirers.

"Now," she said, addressing Kitty, "tell me about this grand ball. When does it take place?"

"Next week," answered the young girl. "It ought to be splendid, for it is at a good house. Have you not noticed how dances and balls differ according to the house where they are given?"

"Well, dear, for my part, they are all much the same now. It is only a question of their being more or less tiresome."

"How can you find them tiresome?" said Kitty, wonderingly. "Surely, you are always—how shall I say it?—the belle?"

The abruptness of the remark caused Anna to blush—a little weakness she was very prone to. "Oh, no! Not now," she said; "and if I were, it would make little difference."

"Shall you go to this one?" asked Kitty.

"I fear that I must, if I remain in Moscow."

"I should so like to see you there," said the girl.

"Well, that will be one consolation to me, if I find that I must go. But I think I can guess why you wish me to be there. You expect something important to happen on that evening."

"How do you know it? It—it is true."

"Ah! my dear, I have been a girl myself, and passed through it all."

Kitty smiled as she heard Anna's words. "What has she passed through?" she thought. "How I would like to know what her romance was!" and she remembered

what she had been told of Anna's prosaic and unromantic marriage.

"I am very well informed, I can assure you," continued Anna. "Stiva has told me, and I met Wronsky on my arrival this morning. I was very pleased with him."

"Ah! was he at the station?" asked Kitty, blushing
"And what did Stiva tell you?"

"Merely some gossip. I traveled all yesterday with the Countess Wronsky, and all her conversation was of this wonderful son of hers. He is her favorite, and she is prejudiced in his favor, I suppose; but she told me of many things which prove his brave and chivalrous nature. In a word, he is a sort of hero," added Anna, smiling, as she thought of his gift to the unfortunate widow at the railway-station. "The countess asked me to call on her," she continued, "and I shall do so to-morrow. Stiva is a long time with Dolly; but I am glad of it—it is a good sign," she added, so abruptly as to arouse Kitty's astonishment; and she turned to the children and commenced to play with them.

CHAPTER XV.

JUST at the moment that tea was served, Dolly came out from her room. Stéphane had made his exit by another door.

"I am afraid that you may find your room too cold," said Dolly to Anna. "Let me have it changed to one on this floor."

"I assure you," replied Anna, "that I can sleep anywhere, and always very soundly."

"What is the matter?" asked Stéphane, entering the room and addressing his wife.

There was nothing in his voice to indicate a reconciliation.

"I want Anna to occupy another room, and if so, I must see to it myself," answered Dolly.

The coldness of her tone somewhat alarmed Anna.

"Don't you bother about it, Dolly," said Stéphane; "I will arrange it."

"I know what that means," Dolly said, with a mock-

ing laugh. "You will give the order to Matvei, then you will go out, and the whole thing will be forgotten."

"Thank God!" said Anna to herself, "they are reconciled!" and going up to Dolly, she kissed her tenderly.

"I don't know why you should always suspect Matvei and myself," laughed Stépane.

Throughout the remainder of the evening, Dolly's manner toward her husband was slightly ironical, while he himself was all gayety and cheerfulness, though somewhat subdued, as if to show that the forgiveness could not banish the offense from his own mind.

Toward ten o'clock, while the conversation round the tea-table was still brisk and lively, a little incident occurred.

They were talking of some mutual friend in St. Petersburg, and Anna, recollecting that she had his photograph in her album, left the room to fetch it from her own apartment. As she reached the staircase, there was a ring at the street bell.

"Who can that be?" said Dolly.

"It is too early for them to have sent from home for me," remarked Kitty, "and too late for any visitor."

"Probably some message or papers for me," said Stépane.

Anna was standing at the foot of the stairs, the hall-light throwing its glow around her. A servant opened the door, and in the visitor Anna was astonished to recognize Wronsky. A strange sensation of joy and affright passed through her heart. Wronsky stood upon the threshold, without removing his cloak, and sought for something in one of his pockets. He suddenly raised his eyes, and as they met those of Anna, who had now ascended a few stairs, an expression of confusion passed across his face.

She made a slight bow to him, and passed upstairs as she heard Stépane's voice calling to Wronsky to come in. The latter's refusal, however, reached her ears.

When she came down again with the album, Wronsky had gone, and Stépane was explaining the object of his call. It was to tell the exact hour of a dinner which was to be given the next day to some celebrity who was passing through Moscow.

"What a curious fellow he is! I could not persuade him to come in."

Kitty blushed. She thought she knew the reason of this sudden bashfulness on Wronsky's part.

"He has been to the house," she said to herself, "and finding no one at home, guessed that I was here. He would not come in because of Anna being here and the lateness of the hour."

They all commenced to examine Anna's album, and the subject was dropped; nevertheless, each of them was more or less puzzled at the visit on such a trifling excuse—none more than Anna, to whom it seemed a curious, if not a displeasing, occurrence.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE ball had hardly commenced, when Kitty and her mother ascended the brilliantly lighted staircase, with its double row of powdered lackeys in gorgeous livery.

Kitty was looking her very best. Even she herself was aware of this in her innermost mind. Never had she so clearly felt the power of her own beauty, and as she surveyed herself in a long mirror before entering the ball-room, a glow of self-satisfaction passed through the young girl's frame.

Hardly had she entered the room than she was greeted by the famous leader of cotillons and general master-of-ceremonies, the dandy, Georges Korsunsky.

"You have done well to come early," he said. "I can not understand those people who make a rule of arriving when a ball is half over;" and, almost without being formally asked by him, she found herself being whirled away in the mazes of the dance.

"It is less than no exertion to dance with you," he said. "You have the perfection of lightness and precision. It is charming!"

Kitty smiled at this praise from one who was an undisputed authority, and glanced over his shoulder and around the room in search of her most intimate friends. At last she saw them in a corner of the room—Lydia, the beautiful wife of her present partner, Korsunsky; her brother-in-law Stépane, standing side by side with his sister Anna; and then—*him* for whom she looked most of all. She had not met him since the evening on which she had refused



KITTY

Levine, and now she thought that his eyes were seeking hers.

"Will you take me to Madame Karénine?" she asked her partner.

"Certainly, wherever you command;" and a few turns brought them to where the little group was standing.

Anna's costume was of black velvet, cut low enough to show her symmetrical neck and the beauty of her white and well-formed arms. She wore little or no jewelry save a necklace and tiara of marvelous pearls.

"A waltz with you, Anna Arcadievna!" cried Korsunsky, as he joined the group.

"Thanks; but I do not dance if I can avoid it."

"You can not avoid it to-night."

At this moment Wronsky approached.

"Well," said Anna, quickly, and paying no attention to Wronsky's salutation, "in that case, I suppose I must yield;" and she moved away on Korsunsky's arm.

"Why did she do that?" thought Kitty, who had remarked the evident intention with which Anna slighted Wronsky.

He himself gave up Kitty and said some words of regret at not having seen her for so long. She, as he spoke, was watching Anna dancing, astonished that he did not at once ask her to dance. At last, with a certain hesitation, he invited her, and as his arm encircled her, Kitty was well aware that the look she gave him was one full of love and tenderness. It was many years before she could recall the occasion, and the betrayal of her own feelings, without a sensation of bitter grief and shame at her heart. When they had made a few turns, the music ceased, and Kitty returned to her mother's side. She was chatting with the Countess Nordstone when Wronsky again came to seek her for a square dance. It was not, however, to such dances that Kitty had been looking forward with a beating of her heart, but to the cotillon. It was then, she felt certain, that everything would be decided. Although he had not yet asked her, she had so far relied upon it as to refuse half a dozen other invitations.

The ball went on, and the last quadrille was reached. To Kitty the evening had been an enchanted one, full of the scent of flowers, sweet sounds, and joyous motion. During this last quadrille, which she danced with a some-

what tiresome young adorer, she found herself *vis-à-vis* to Wronsky and Anna. Kitty could not fail to see that Anna's whole manner and appearance had altered since the commencement of the evening. She looked excited, and as if intoxicated with success. "Who is the cause of it?" Kitty asked herself. "Is it from one conquest, or several?" She hardly listened to her partner's conversation, or the noisy directions of Korsunsky, who was directing the quadrille; her whole attention was given to the couple opposite her.

"No," she thought again, "it is not the admiration of the crowd which has caused her to change. It is one man. Who is it? Can it be—*he*?"

At each remark of Wronsky's, Anna's eyes would lighten up and a smile of happiness rise to her lips. She seemed as if struggling to conceal this happiness, but without success; it was too strong for her.

Then Kitty looked at him and her heart stood still with fear. The same look was on his face as upon Anna's. Where was his usual *sang-froid*, the calmness and repose of feature? As he spoke to his partner, bending his head as if in humble worship, there was a look of passion in his eyes. "I would save my heart from you," it seemed to say, "but how can I? It is impossible!"

And yet, what little of their conversation Kitty could hear in the movements of the dance was trivial and commonplace enough.

Poor child! The whole fabric had fallen, and her innocent young heart was in a turmoil. With an effort she forced herself to answer her partner's questions, and even to smile.

The quadrille was over, and they were arranging the chairs for the cotillon. Despair seized upon Kitty; she, in spite of her many offers, was without a partner. She would have told her mother that she was suffering and wished to be taken from the ball, but her strength failed her; she felt crushed and broken. She hurried to a small boudoir where no one was, and threw herself upon a sofa, intense despair at her heart.

"Perhaps I am mistaken," she thought. "Surely, it can not be!"

"What is the matter, Kitty?" asked the Countess Nordstone, entering the room. Kitty rose hurriedly, with





crembling lips. "Why are you not joining in the cotillon?"

"I do not wish to," Kitty answered in a half-broken voice.

"He asked her to be his partner in my presence," said the countess, knowing well the cause of the girl's trouble. "She said to him, 'Are you not dancing it with the Princess Cherbatzky?'"

"It does not matter to me," said Kitty. The countess could not tell that, shortly before, the girl had sacrificed a man whom perhaps she might have loved to this false and ungrateful suitor.

The countess went to find Korsunsky, and begged him to invite Kitty for the cotillon.

Fortunately for Kitty, her partner's duties in directing the dance saved her from the effort of conversation. Wronsky and Anna were again almost opposite her.

In spite of the crowd, it seemed as if they two were alone, unconscious of all save themselves. On Wronsky's usually placid face Kitty again remarked the expression of humility and half fear such as one sees in the eyes of an intelligent dog.

If Anna smiled, his smile answered hers; if she, for a moment, became pensive, he, in turn, was serious. In her costume of black, with flushed cheeks and sparkling eyes, she looked even more charming than on her entrance to the ball-room; but to Kitty's eyes there was something in her attractiveness which was almost terrible and cruel-looking.

A movement of the dance brought them together. Anna pressed the girl's hands and looked at her with half-closed eyes; but when she saw the expression of grief and surprise in Kitty's face, she turned quickly away and spoke to her nearest neighbor in an excited, animated tone. When the dance was over, Anna commenced to make her adieus, refusing the host's persuasion to remain to supper.

"No, I can not stop," she said, with a smile, but with the evident intention of being firm in her refusal. "I have danced more at this one ball, here in Moscow, than during the whole winter at St. Petersburg;" and she turned to Wronsky, who was standing near. "I need some rest, too, before my journey," she added.

“And you go, for certain, to-morrow?” he asked.

“Yes, I think so,” answered Anna, as if astonished at the boldness of the question.

Again refusing all entreaties to remain, Anna left the ball-room.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE morning after his interview with Kitty, Levine left Moscow, and toward evening had arrived at his own home. During the journey, he had conversed with his fellow-passengers on every conceivable topic; but, all the time, he felt as if in a dream, and as if some great misfortune had overtaken him. When, however, on reaching his own station and seeing his coachman, Ignace, wrapped in heavy furs, patiently waiting for him; when, as they drove away, the old servant poured forth a string of home news and domestic happenings, telling of the arrival of Simon, the head steward; how Pava, Levine's most valuable and best-bred cow, had calved the day before, Constantin's ideas marshaled themselves in order, and a portion of his discontent seemed to be lifted away. He ceased to regret his own individuality and to wish that he was some one else than himself, and in place of the regret there came a determination to prove himself a better and more useful man than he had hitherto been.

Levine's house was an old-fashioned and roomy mansion. In his eyes, it was the dearest spot in all the world. His father and mother had lived and died there—lived what seemed to him the very ideal of existence, and one which his great envy was to follow. The memory of his mother was something sacred; he longed for a wife who should follow in her very footsteps. For him there could be no love apart from marriage. He went still further—he thought first of the family which might be given him, and then of the wife who might bear them.

When he entered the little sitting-room, where, as a rule, his tea was served, and was seated, with a book, in his own chair, while Agatha Mikhiloona brought him his cup, addressing him as “*Mon Petit Père*,” he felt that, in spite of what had recently occurred, his former dreams of domestic life were not dispelled, and that he could not exist without them.



Agatha told him all the gossip and trivial details of the household, and, as he listened, his thoughts went far afield, picturing the life it would be possible for him to lead with a wife of tastes in sympathy with his own. He thought of what had occurred in Moscow. "I can do no more," he said to himself; "even if things can never be quite the same, I must not be influenced by what has passed, but must try to improve my life to raise it to a higher level." As he was pondering over past and future, his old and faithful dog, Laska, bounded into the room, overjoyed to see his master again, and seeming to bring with him the odor of the fresh and frosty air outside. The dog ran to him with furious wagging of the tail, and laid his head upon Levine's knee, awaiting the caress which he knew was sure to come.

"He can do everything but speak," said old Agatha. "He understands that his master has come home and is feeling sad."

"Why sad?" asked Levine.

"Can I not see it, Petit Père? It is time that I should be able to read my master's feelings, for have I not grown up with them? If one's health is good, and one's conscience pure, nothing else can signify."

Levine looked at her attentively, astonished that she should have been able to read his thoughts.

"Shall I fill your cup again?" she asked, moving toward the table.

Laska remained motionless, with his head in Levine's lap, who patted him affectionately. Then the dog moved away, and, stretching himself at his master's feet, composed himself to sleep in canine fashion, with eye and ear constantly on the alert. Levine looked down at him and smiled.

"I, too," he said, "will go and rest. Everything will arrange itself in time."

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE morning after the ball, Anna Arcadieвна telegraphed to her husband in St. Petersburg that she would leave Moscow that day.

Dolly parted from her with affectionate regret, while Stépane, who accompanied her to the station, was profuse

in his expressions of gratitude for the reconciliation she had brought about. "I shall never forget it, Anna," he said, "and, as in the past, shall always look upon you as the best friend a brother ever had."

"I can not understand why," said Anna, kissing him, while the tears came to her eyes.

"You do understand, and you have always understood," answered Stépane. "Good-bye, dear."

"Thank God, it is all over!" was Anna's thought, as she threw herself back in the seat which her maid had procured for her. "To-morrow I shall see Serge and Alexis Alexandrovitch again, and life will go on as before."

As she settled herself for the journey, some ladies, fellow-passengers, entered into conversation with her, and spoke of the intense cold. Anna answered politely but very briefly; and when the maid had affixed her little reading-lamp to the cushion of her seat, she commenced to read an English novel. She had difficulty in keeping her thoughts upon the book before her; every little trifle distracted her attention—the snow beating against the windows; the passage of the conductor through the train, his beard glistening with frozen moisture; the conversation of those around her. She reviewed in her mind the events which had transpired during her stay in Moscow. She thought of Wronsky and their sudden friendship, of his looks, respectful but full of admiration; and, on the whole, she found her reflections pleasant and agreeable. As night drew on, the book fell from her hands, and she fell into a sort of waking slumber. The people and objects in the carriage assumed grotesque and indistinct shapes, puzzling and amusing her at the same time. Suddenly, just as consciousness seemed leaving her, she started and quickly raised herself in her seat. A man, covered from head to foot with snow, stood at the door calling out the name of some station, and Anna noticed that the train had come to a standstill.

"Does madame wish to go outside?" asked Annouchka, the maid; "we stop here for some minutes."

"Yes," said Anna. "I would like some fresh air—it is so warm in here."

She opened the door and stepped out upon the snow-covered platform of the station.

The snow was still falling heavily, blown about by a



bold and piercing wind. Passengers were walking hurriedly up and down, some rushing to and from the telegraph-office and refreshment-room, others trying to enjoy their cigar or cigarette. As Anna stood looking on the busy scene, a tall figure, wrapped in a military cloak, approached her. In a moment she recognized Wronsky. He raised his cap, and, in a respectful tone, asked her if he could be of any service. Anna looked at him, and for a few seconds could not answer; she experienced a sudden feeling of pride and joy. It was useless to ask him why he was there; she knew too well what his answer would be.

"I did not know you were coming to St. Petersburg," she said, struggling to hide the pleasure in her looks. "May I ask why?"

"Why?" he repeated, looking fixedly into her face. "You know very well that it is because I must be where you are. There could be no other reason."

She was silent; but he could read her thoughts and her inward struggle.

"Forgive me if what I have said displeases you," he said in a low tone, but one which showed no want of resolution or decision.

"What you said was certainly not right," she replied, "and, as a gentleman, you will forget it as I myself shall."

"I shall not forget it, any more than I can forget you—"

"Enough, enough!" she cried, trying to force a look of severity into her face, and turning to re-enter the carriage. She stood by the door for some moments, as if about to rebuke him still further; but the words would not come to her, and she entered the carriage and once more took her seat.

When the train moved on, she found that sleep was out of the question; her nerves were overstrained, and the same feeling of troublous joy came back to her. Toward morning she sunk into a light doze, from which she did not awaken until the train was gliding into the station at St. Petersburg. Her first conscious thought was of the home to which she was returning, of her husband and her son. As she left the carriage, the first face she saw was that of her husband, and a strange sensation came over her at the sight of his cold but distinguished looking features

Karénine advanced toward his wife with his usual ironical smile upon his lips. His look annoyed Anna. She felt a sudden discontent, not only with herself, but with the hypocrisy which now, for the first time, she recognized in her relations with her husband.

"You see what an affectionate husband I am," he said in his gentle, slightly mocking voice; "as affectionate as during the first year of our married life. I have been burning with desire to see you again."

"How is Serge?" she asked, abruptly.

"And that is how you quench the flame," he said. "Serge is well—very well."

At this moment Wronsky approached her. He had spent a no less troubled night than Anna herself. Their short interview during the journey had told him even more than he had wished to know. When he took his own seat in the train again, his mind was full of the future and its possibilities which his imagination painted.

When they arrived at St. Petersburg, he stood near the door of his carriage to see her pass. "She may perhaps say a word or two to me, or at least give me a look, a smile," he thought. But his eyes fell upon the husband, and Wronsky, for the first time, realized that this husband was an essential part of Anna's life. Aware as he was that she was married, the existence of her husband had never entered his mind, nor troubled him for one moment. But now he was there, before his eyes, holding Anna's hand in the manner of one whose property it was. The sight of Karénine irritated him; it was as if some parched and thirsty man had come upon a spring of clear, cold water, only to discover that it had been polluted by some dog or unclean animal. Wronsky gave his valet some instructions concerning his luggage, and walked toward Anna. As he watched her face, he said to himself: "No, she does not love him, and never could love him."

"Did you pass the night well?" he asked, saluting her.

"Thanks; yes, very well," she answered. Tired as her looks were, there was an expression in her eyes, as they met his own, which filled Wronsky with delight. Karénine was looking at him with an air of slight impatience. "Count Wronsky," said Anna, introducing him.

"Ah! I think we must have met before," said Karénine, indifferently, as they shook hands. "You were fortu-

nate, Anna," he continued, "in traveling one way with the mother, and the return journey with the son. I suppose you have been on leave, Count Wronsky?" and without waiting for an answer, turned again to his wife with some trivial question.

Accepting the evident hint that Karénine wished to be alone with his wife, Wronsky took his leave.

"I hope to have the honor of calling on you," he said, addressing Anna.

It was Karénine himself who answered in his cold, indifferent tone:

"We shall be most happy. We receive on Mondays."

CHAPTER XIX.

THE first to greet Anna on her entering the house was her little son Serge. He came bounding down the staircase, crying out: "Mamma! mamma!" in a transport of joy, and threw his arms about her neck.

"I told you it must be my mamma when we heard the bell," he said to his governess, who followed him. "I was quite sure it was she."

But the sight of the son, even as of the father, caused Anna to feel a strange disappointment, a sort of disillusion. He was a graceful, handsome lad to look at—and yet this new and unaccustomed feeling came upon her.

She returned his caresses, and answered his prattling, childish questions, while she unpacked the presents which Dolly and his little cousins had sent him. She told him of the little girl Tania, just his own age, who was now able to read to her younger brothers and sisters.

"Is she nicer than I am?" asked the boy.

"No, dear, not to me. To me you are the best in the whole world."

"I was sure of it," said the child, with a loving smile.

Karénine returned from his official duties at the ministry toward four o'clock, going straight to his library to examine and sign a batch of documents which his secretary had arranged for him.

At five o'clock he entered the salon, where Anna was already entertaining a few guests invited to dinner, in his evening dress and one or two decorations pinned to his coat. Punctuality was his one rule, "No laziness, and no

rash haste" his motto. During dinner, save for a few questions by the husband to the wife as to her doings in Moscow, the conversation was general, and chiefly on topics of St. Petersburg society.

When dinner was over, he remained talking with his guests for a half hour, and then left to attend a meeting of the council. Anna had received an invitation for the evening, from the Princess Betsy Tverskoï, but decided neither to go there nor to to their own box at the theater. When the guests had gone, she devoted her evening to her little son, putting him to bed with her own hands, and not leaving him until his eyes were closed in childish slumber.

Precisely at half past nine Karénine returned and entered the salon.

"You have come at last?" she said, extending her hand.

He kissed it, and sat down by her side.

"Your visit to Moscow was successful?" he asked.

"Perfectly," she answered; and gave him a full account of all her doings, and of the reconciliation.

"I can make no excuses for such a man," said Karénine in a severe tone, alluding to Stépane, "even though he is your own brother."

Anna smiled. She knew that it was not in his nature to allow relationship to influence his judgment, and she respected him for it.

"Still," he continued, "I am glad you were able to arrange matters, and still more glad to see you home again. Did you not wish to go out to-night?" he asked, as he rose to return to his library.

"No, not at all," she answered. "What book are you reading now?"

"The '*Poésie des Enfers*,' by the Duc de Lille, a most remarkable book," he answered, with enthusiasm.

She smiled again, and, taking his arm, walked to the library with him.

"Well, good-night," she said, as they reached the room where his favorite chair and reading-lamp and carafe of water were all arranged for him. "I must go and write a few lines to Moscow, to tell them of my safe return."

"He is a good man, and an honest and loyal one," said Anna to herself, as she entered her boudoir; but on her face there was no smile such as she had worn in the ball-

room at Moscow, and the glad light was absent from her eyes.

PART SECOND.

CHAPTER I.

TOWARD the end of the winter, the Cherbatzkys deemed it expedient to call a consultation of physicians in regard to their daughter Kitty's health. For some weeks she had been growing thinner and paler every day, nor had such remedies as the family doctor prescribed the least effect in bringing her back to health. The result of the consultation, at the head of which was the leading specialist of Moscow, was that she must have immediate change of air and scene, and must go abroad.

As soon as the doctors had left the house, the prince entered the room where his wife and daughters—for Dolly had come to support her sister during the ordeal of examination—were discussing future plans.

Dolly herself was far from well or happy; a change for the worse had come upon her life. She felt constantly humiliated by the renewal of her former relations with Stépane. The reconciliation which had been effected by Anna had been of little use. The husband absented himself as much as ever from the house, and the suspicions which Dolly could not drive out of her mind tortured her beyond endurance. Some of her children, too, were suffering from a sickness, childish but severe, and her whole horizon seemed very dark.

"What has been decided?" asked the prince. "You are to go abroad? And what is to become of me?"

"I think, Alexander," said the princess, "you had better remain here."

"As you think best."

"Why should not papa come with us?" asked Kitty.

"It would be much pleasanter, both for himself and us."

The prince went over to her and lovingly stroked her hair. She lifted her face and smiled at him, though as if with an effort. It seemed to her that her father under-

stood her better than any one; and, to him, she was his youngest and best-loved child.

"Kitty," he said, "I can tell you what you must do. Some fine morning you must wake up and say to yourself, 'I am quite well and happy. Why should I not take one of the old walks with papa in the bright sunlight and frosty air?'"

At these simple words, Kitty trembled with emotion. "He understands everything," she thought, "and means that, however greatly I may have been humiliated, I should do my best to struggle against it, and overcome it;" and she ran from the room.

"Alexander, you are cruel!" said the princess. "Can you not see that the poor girl is suffering, and that any allusion to the cause of her grief pains her beyond endurance?" and they both knew that she was alluding to Wronsky. "I can not understand why there should be no law to punish such vile conduct."

The prince rose and moved toward the door, then stopped, as if he felt that he must speak. "There are laws to punish most offenses, Ma Petite Mère, but since you have opened the subject, I must tell you that I think you yourself are greatly to blame for this affair. Old as I am, I would have undertaken to bring him to task had it not been that you were the one to invite him to this house." It was seldom that the prince spoke so sternly, and his wife could not keep back her tears. "Don't cry," he said in a gentler voice; "I know it is hard for you also. Perhaps God will take pity on us all;" and raising her hand to his lips, he left the room.

Within a few days, while Lent was still in progress, the Oherbatzkys left Moscow and went abroad.

CHAPTER II.

THE highest society of St. Petersburg is limited to a narrow circle as regards perfect intimacy. The well-born families may all know and visit each other, but there are certain definite subdivisions.

Anna Karénine was a privileged member of at least three different circles in the great world. First, there was the ministerial and official circle, composed of her husband's colleagues and subordinates.



WRONSKY

The second was the more social one which had contributed to the career of Alexis Karénine. Of this, the Countess Lydia Ivanovna was the pivot, and it was mainly composed of learned, scientific, and prominent men, and of elderly, well-born, charitable women. Some one, in jest, had once christened it "the *conscience* of St. Petersburg."

The third set with which Anna had intimate relations, was that of society *par excellence*; the world which occupied itself with balls, dinners, brilliant toilets, and gayeties of every sort. The tie which bound Anna to this world of pleasure was the Princess Betsy Tverskoï, the wife of one of her cousins, possessed of an enormous income. "When I am old and ugly," said Betsy, when discussing the princess and her associates, "I will apply for admittance to this 'asylum for aged people'—not before."

Hitherto, Anna had rather avoided the society of which the Princess Tverskoï was an acknowledged leader, but since her return from Moscow, everything had changed. She neglected her more staid and quiet friends for the more pronounced world of fashion. It was there that she experienced the troublous joy of meeting Wronsky. They met, most often, at the house of the Princess Betsy, who was herself a Wronsky, and the young soldier found frequent opportunities of expressing his love for Anna. She, on her part, made no actual response or advance; but, in her heart, the same feeling was ever present which he had experienced at their meeting on the train. Her joy was visible in her eyes, her smile, her every glance; and, do what she would, she could not conceal it.

For a long time Anna tried to flatter herself that Wronsky's attentions—persecutions, she called them—were displeasing to her; but the truth became only too clear to her one evening, when, on going to a house where she had felt sure of meeting him, she found that he was not present. Then, at last, she was forced to own that he was now the dominating interest in her life.

One night, from his seat at the opera, Wronsky perceived the Princess Betsy in her box, and, without waiting for the *entr'acte*, joined her.

"Why did you not come to dinner?" she asked him. Then lowering her voice: "I do envy the second-sight which you lovers are gifted with—*she* was not there; but come after the opera."

Wronsky looked at her inquiringly; but Betsy merely made a little movement of her head, and continued, "Where has all your old gayety vanished to? You are *épris*, my friend."

"That is all I desire," answered Wronsky, smiling. "If I have any fault to find, it is that I am not sufficiently so. I am even beginning to lose hope."

"What hope are you entitled to have?" said Betsy in defense of her absent friend; but her eyes told only too plainly how well she understood.

"None," he answered, laughing, and showing his perfect teeth. "Excuse me," he added, taking the opera glass from her hands and looking across the house; "I am afraid of making myself ridiculous."

He knew very well that in Betsy's eyes and those of her world, he ran no such risk. There might be a chance of ridicule were he hopelessly in love with a young girl or an unmarried woman, but in risking everything to seduce a married woman there was small chance of being laughed at.

CHAPTER III.

THE Princess Betsy left the theater before the end of the last act. Hardly had she reached her own boudoir and made some little alterations in her toilet than the carriages of her guests began to roll past the large gates of the palace, and discharge their occupants at the door, which was noiselessly opened to them by a gigantic Swiss lackey. The mistress of the house received her friends in the large salon, its walls hung with somber-colored draperies and tapestry, its floor covered with a luxuriously thick carpet. Upon a table, with a cloth of spotless white, and lighted by numerous wax candles, stood a silver samovar and tea service of most delicate porcelain.

After a time the princess removed her gloves and sat down before the samovar, while the footmen glided about the room serving the cups of fragrant tea.

Wronsky had already arrived, and was standing by her side when Anna entered the room. She crossed toward the mistress of the house with a light and rapid step, and greeted her; then turned to Wronsky.



"I received a letter from Moscow to-day," she said.
"They write me that Kitty Cherbatzky is very ill."

"Indeed?" said Wronsky, gravely.

Anna looked fixedly at him.

"Is it such a matter of indifference to you?" she asked.

"On the contrary, I am deeply grieved. What are the particulars, if I may ask?"

Anna approached Betsy.

"Will you give me a cup of tea?" she said.

As Betsy poured out the tea, Wronsky came up to Anna.

"What have they written?" he asked again.

"I have often thought that what they call nobility of action in men is a mere empty phrase. I have several times felt tempted to tell you this," she added, moving away to a table on which a number of photographs were lying.

"I can not quite understand your words," he said, relieving her of the empty cup.

She glanced at the sofa near her, and they both sat down.

"Yes, I have often wanted to say it," she continued, without looking at him. "You have behaved badly, very badly."

"Do you not suppose that I am aware of it? But whose fault is it? Who is responsible?"

"Why do you ask me that?" she said in a severe tone.

"You know only too well," he answered, meeting her look without lowering his eyes.

She was conquered. "It only proves that you have no heart," she said; but her eyes expressed the very contrary.

"What you have just spoken of was a mistake—it was not love."

"Have I not forbidden you to use that wretched word?" said Anna, trembling; and as the word "forbidden" passed her lips she saw that it implied some claim upon him, some rights to his obedience. "For a long time I have been wishing to talk to you," she continued in a firm tone, though her cheeks were dyed with crimson. "I came here to-night for that purpose, knowing that I should meet you. This must all come to an end. No one has ever before caused me to blush; but you have, and you have caused me grief, too."

He looked at her, struck with the unusual beauty of her face.

"What would you have me do?" he asked, simply and seriously.

"I would have you go to Moscow and ask Kitty's pardon."

"You do *not* wish it!" he exclaimed, for he plainly saw that her words and her desire were at variance.

"If you loved me as you say you do," she murmured, "you would take care that I was at peace."

Wronsky's whole face lightened up.

"Do you not know," he exclaimed, "that you are everything to me? But I myself do not know what peace of mind means, nor can I give it you. I can give you my whole being, my whole love, yes; but I can not separate you from myself in my own thoughts. To my eyes, you and I are one. I can foresee no peace of mind in the future either for you or for myself. I can see one of two things only—despair or happiness—and what happiness!" he added, almost inaudibly.

Her whole intelligence asserted itself and showed her what answer it was her duty to make; but, instead of speaking, she looked at him with eyes full of love and remained silent.

"My God!" he thought, while his brain seemed to reel with joy, "at the moment when I was despairing, when all seemed hopeless, love has come! She loves me—her looks avow it!"

"Let us be good friends, and never speak to me like this again," were her words; but her looks spoke differently.

"We can never be *friends*—you know it well yourself. We must either be the happiest or the most wretched of mortals. It rests with you to decide which."

She would have spoken, but he interrupted her:

"All that I ask is the right to hope and suffer as I do at this moment. If it can never be, bid me to disappear, and I will disappear. You shall never again be troubled with a presence which is odious to you."

"I do not wish to send you away."

"Then let there be no change. Leave things as they are," he said in a trembling voice. "But—there is your husband."

As a fact, Karénine at that moment entered the room, with his usual calm air and awkward step.

He approached the mistress of the house, throwing a passing glance on Anna and Wronsky; then taking a seat near the tea-table, he looked round the assembly, and said, with the mocking smile upon his lips:

“Princess, your *rambouillet* is complete. You have all the Graces and the Muses.”

But the Princess Betsy, who abominated his sneering manner, was quick to meet his attack, and at once challenged him to a discussion on some public affair. Wronsky and Anna retained their seats near the little table.

“This *affaire* is becoming somewhat tiresome,” said one guest in a low tone to her next neighbor.

“What did I tell you?” replied the other.

Nor were they the only ones to notice and criticise. The eyes of most of those present were from time to time turned upon the two who sat apart. Karénine, apparently, was the only one who remained obstinately blind and in-wrapped in his own conversation.

At last the Princess Betsy, noticing the bad effect produced upon her guests, cut short her conversation with Karénine, and crossed the room to where Anna sat.

“I am always,” she said, “so much struck with your husband’s terse and clear language when discussing anything. He makes the most formidable questions appear quite simple.”

“Oh, yes,” said Anna, hardly hearing the princess’s words, and radiant with happiness. She rose and joined in the general conversation.

When half an hour had passed, Karénine proposed to his wife that they should return home; but she, almost without looking at him, declared that she wished to remain to supper. He made his own adieus and left.

It was much later when Wronsky conducted Anna to her own carriage, which was still in waiting, the servants and horses almost frozen with the cold.

“Remember,” said Wronsky, “though you have made no promise, it is more than friendship that I want. As for me, the only happiness of my life is contained in that word which you disliked so much—love!”

“Love!” she repeated, softly, to herself. “The use of the word displeases me because, in my mind, it means so

much—more than you can ever imagine. *Au revoir,*” she added, giving him one glance as the carriage rolled away. Her look, the clasp of her hand, set Wronsky’s brain in a whirl. He kissed the spot her fingers had touched, and went toward his own home, convinced that this evening had brought him near the realization of his dream.

CHAPTER IV.

ON finding his wife engaged in a marked *tête-à-tête* conversation with Wronsky, Alexis Karénine had felt little or no annoyance; but when he subsequently perceived that the two were the subjects of half-whispered conversation throughout the room, he determined to give Anna some sort of warning.

On reaching the house, he went, as usual, to his library and commenced to read an abstruse article on papism which he had received that day. From time to time he passed his hand across his forehead, as if to brush away some thought which troubled him. At the accustomed hour he closed his book and returned to make his toilet for the night. Anna had not yet returned. Finding that his mind was stirred beyond its wont, Karénine commenced to walk up and down the length of the rooms, which were connected with each other, and to let his thoughts wander as they willed.

He was not jealous. A husband, in his eyes, insulted his wife by displaying jealousy. Strange to say, the one question which he never for a moment thought of putting to himself was—why should he feel confident that she would always love and be faithful to him? Having never known suspicion or doubt, his trust was still entire. But, for some reason he could not explain, even to himself, he felt at this moment like a man walking tranquilly across a bridge between two precipices and feeling the bridge sink suddenly beneath his feet.

Without thinking of undressing, he continued his promenade of the dimly lighted rooms, turning his steps in his wife’s boudoir, full of its little ornaments and feminine luxuries. More than once he stopped short and said to himself: “Yes, it must be put a stop to, definitely and at once; but what shall I say? What reason shall I put for-

ward? I know absolutely nothing save that she was talking confidentially and for a long time with the young man. To show myself jealous would be to humiliate both of us." Then, with greater insistency the thought would come: "It must be cut short. Others, if not I myself, have noticed and remarked upon it." He seated himself in her boudoir and endeavored to think out his plan of action. "I must impress certain things upon her mind," he said to himself. "First, the meaning and importance of public opinion; secondly, the religious obligations which marriage brings; thirdly, the evil which might react upon her young son; and fourthly, the possible harm to herself."

The noise of carriage-wheels reached his ears, and soon he heard Anna's footsteps as she slowly mounted the staircase.

She entered the room, toying with the gloves she had just removed. There was a strange light in her face, but not one of joy. When she saw her husband, she raised her head and smiled, as if waking from some dream.

"Not in bed?" she said. "What a wonder!" and she passed through to her own dressing-room, calling out to him: "It is very late, Alexis."

"Anna, I wish to talk with you."

"With me?" she said in an astonished tone, re-entering the room and looking at her husband. "About what? Well"—sitting down—"let us talk."

"Anna, I want you to be upon your guard."

"Upon my guard? Why?"

Her tone and looks were both simple and natural.

"She will be candid with me," he thought, "and we can both speak openly."

"I wish to put you on your guard," he continued, "against the interpretation the world will put upon what is simply imprudence and frivolity on your part. Your animated conversation to-night with Count Wronsky"—he pronounced the name slowly and firmly—"attracted great attention."

As he spoke, he looked into her smiling but impenetrable eyes, and in a moment full of terror it flashed upon him that his words would be useless and in vain.

"It is always so with you," she replied, as if hardly conscious of the words he had used. "At times you are

displeased because I am dull; at others, because I amuse myself; to-night I enjoyed myself, and that annoys you."

Karénine trembled and fidgeted about in his seat.

"Please keep still," she added, irritably. "I am very nervous to-night."

"Anna, can it be yourself who is speaking?" he said, making an effort to control himself.

"What is it all about?" she insisted. "What do you wish me to do?"

"What I would say to you is this," he answered in a cold, quiet tone; "and I must ask you to hear me to the end. As you may know, I look upon jealousy as a hurtful and humiliating sentiment, of which I hope never to be guilty; but there are certain social barriers which can not be overstepped with safety. Judging from the impression you seem to have given to-night—not to myself, but to the others who were present—you have not been very careful of yourself."

"Perhaps not," said Anna, with a shrug of her shoulders. "That is just like him," she thought; "he simply cares about what others think." "You are not well, Alexis," she continued, rising to leave the room; but he stood before her and stopped her, with a sterner expression on his face than she had ever seen before. "Well," she said in a calm, mocking tone, "I am listening. I am even interested, because I want to learn what it all means."

Her own calmness, and the ease with which the words came to her, surprised herself.

"I have no right," commenced Karénine, "to inquire into your feelings. It would be useless, and even dangerous. If we search too deeply into our souls, we may chance upon something which had better have remained hidden. Your own conscience is responsible for your feelings, but, between you and myself and God, I am obliged to remind you of your duties. Our lives have been joined together, not by men, but by Him. Only sin can break the tie—a sin which brings its own punishment."

"I do not understand what you are talking about, and I am very tired and sleepy," said Anna, drawing the jeweled fastenings from her hair.

"Anna, in Heaven's name, do not speak so!" he said, quietly. "Perhaps I have been mistaken; but, believe

me, what I say is as much for your own sake as for mine. I am your husband, and I love you."

For an instant Anna's face softened, and the mocking expression left her eyes; but the word "love" irritated her beyond endurance. "Does he know what love means?" she thought. "If he had not heard the word used he would have ignored it."

"Alexis, I really do not understand you. Please explain yourself clearly."

"I will. Though I love you, it is not for myself that I speak, but rather for yourself and our son. It is possible, I repeat, that my words seem empty and out of place to you—and perhaps I am in error. In that case, I must ask your pardon; but if you yourself feel that there is any foundation, even the slightest, for my remarks, I beg you to reflect over them, and to open your heart to me."

Without being conscious of it, Karénine was using arguments directly opposite to those he had prepared.

"I have no such confidences to give," she said, quickly, suppressing a smile with difficulty; "and it really is time to think of sleep."

Alexis Karénine sighed, and, without a word, walked away to his own room.

Anna remained some time, thinking, almost hoping, that he would return and say no more. At last he passed away from her thoughts, and the image of another filled her heart with a great joy. "It is too late," she thought, "too late!"

CHAPTER V.

FROM that night the relations between Alexis Karénine and his wife were entirely changed. Outwardly, however, their lives continued the same. Anna went much into the world of society, especially to the house of the Princess Betsy, where she was always sure of meeting Wronsky. Karénine was well aware of it, but powerless to prevent it. The slightest remonstrance on his part was met by Anna with an absolutely impenetrable smile. He, who knew himself to be so strong in the important affairs of state, here felt himself powerless. He remained awaiting the final blow, patiently and resigned as an ox at the slaughter-house. Time and again he resolved to try once

more the effect of kindness, tenderness, and affectionate reasoning in restoring Anna to her wonted being; but, on each occasion, he was overcome by the same spirit of evil obstinacy which mastered her, and found himself speaking words far removed from those he had intended.

* * * * *

That which, for a whole year, had been the one end and aim of Wronsky's life, and to Anna a dream, as enchanting as it had seemed improbable and terrible, had come to pass.

Pale and trembling himself, he stood by her side, entreating her to be calm, in words he was unconscious of.

"Anna! Anna!" he said in a voice full of emotion. "Anna! for Heaven's sake, be calm!"

But the higher his voice, the lower she bent her head—the head which, until now, had been so erect and proud, and now was so humiliated. She would have fallen to the ground had he not supported her.

"Oh, forgive me!" she sobbed, pressing his hand against her breast. To herself she was now so culpable and sinning that she felt herself compelled to ask pardon of some one, and it was to him she turned for forgiveness, having now no one else in the world but him.

As for Wronsky, he felt like an assassin standing above the lifeless body of his victim. The sacrifice which had been offered up by them was their love, the first phase of their love. There was something terrible and odious in the thought of what they had paid as the price of their shame.

The feeling of moral degradation which engulfed Anna was not shared by Wronsky. Whatever might be the murderer's horror as he views his victim's corpse, it must be concealed and the fruits of the crime enjoyed. In the same spirit that he might have fallen on the dead body and torn it to pieces in his rage, he now covered this woman's face and neck with kisses. She held his hand and did not move; she had bought the kisses with her honor, the hand was that of her accomplice, and belonged to her forever. She raised it to her own lips and kissed it. Wronsky fell upon his knees and strove to see the face which she kept concealed. At last she rose with an effort and gently put him away. "All is over now," she said. "I have nothing left to me but you. Remember that!"



"How could I forget what is my whole life! For an instant of such happiness—"

"What happiness!" she cried, with an accent of terror and disgust so strong that it was communicated to him. "Not a word—not another word!"

She rose from her seat again, and moved away.

"Not another word!" she repeated, with a strange expression of despair, and quickly passed from the room.

As the meaning of this new existence dawned upon her, Anna felt the impossibility of expressing her shame, her fear, the joy which she experienced. Rather than allow trifling and insufficient words to pass her lips, she preferred to remain silent. And yet, later on, the words which might have adequately told her feelings, would not come to her; even her thoughts could not translate the impressions of her soul. "No," she said to herself, "I can not think of it all now; later, perhaps, when I am calmer." But the calmness did not come. Each time that she thought of what had taken place, of what was still to happen, of what she herself would become, she was terrified, and strove to throw away such thoughts. "Later," she kept repeating to herself—"later on, when I am calmer."

CHAPTER VI.

ONE bright day in early spring, some weeks after his return from Moscow, Levine had ridden to visit a distant portion of his estates and transact some business with his local agent.

As he approached the house again, he saw a carriage, evidently from the neighboring railway-station, draw up to the door, and its occupant, wrapped in a fur cloak, descend. He hurried forward, puzzled as to who the visitor might be, and, much to his astonishment, recognized his friend Stépane Archadievitch.

"How glad I am to see you!" he cried, as they shook hands; and his first thought was: "Now I shall learn for certain if *she* is married."

"You hardly expected me," said Stépane, looking the very picture of health and self-content. "I have come for three objects—to see you; to have a day's shooting; and to sell some of my timber to a neighbor of yours."

"No matter what has brought you, I am delighted to see you," said Levine; and, taking Stépane by the arm, he led him to the room which he set apart for the reception of such visitors. During luncheon, Stépane descanted on the beauty of Levine's home and its surroundings.

"You are a lucky man," he said, "for you possess all that you care for or desire—horses, dogs, abundance of game, broad acres, and good crops. What more can a man want?"

"My luck, perhaps, consists in being able to appreciate what I have, and in not being too envious of what I do not possess," answered Levine, whose thoughts, at the moment, were of Kitty.

Stépane understood him, but said nothing. Levine, much as he wished for news on the subject, could not yet bring himself to make inquiries concerning the Cherbatzkys.

"And how are your affairs?" he asked.

Stépane's face brightened.

"If you remember," he replied, "you have no patience with any one who, on the top of a good meal, takes a fancy to fresh bread, while I will not admit that it is possible to live without love. In any case, I, for one, can not, and I find much pleasure and little wrong in it."

"What! Is there some fresh object?" asked Levine.

"Yes, my friend. The sort of woman that, as a rule, one sees only in dreams—you know the type of the women of Ossian. They are very seldom found in actual life, and when they are—well, one has much to study."

"That is no hardship, I suppose."

"Oh, no; I forget exactly who it was, but some great man has said that true happiness consists in seeking the truth, not in finding it."

Levine said nothing. To him the foibles of his friend were incomprehensible.

After luncheon, the two friends took their guns and, with the dogs, sallied forth in search of game.

The sport was excellent, and as evening drew on, they turned toward home with well-filled bags.

They walked slowly and some little distance apart, for there was still light enough for a chance shot. "Stiva," Levine called out suddenly, "you have not told me if your sister-in-law is already married, or if she is about to be."



He felt so calm and secure of himself that nothing he might hear, he thought, could move him; but Stépane's reply quickly dispelled this illusion:

"She is neither married," he said, "nor has she any intention of marriage. She has been very ill, and the doctors have ordered her abroad. They have even feared for her life."

"What do you say?" cried Levine. Ill! But what is it?"

"How—"

At that moment a shrill note and the rushing of wings met their ears. Levine was the first to fire, and in a few moments, Laska, the dog, ran back with the dead bird in his mouth.

The subject of Kitty's health was not again alluded to until they reached the house, when Stépane gave his host all particulars. As he listened, Levine was conscious that though he might not avow it, he was still possessed of hope, nor could he help a slight feeling of satisfaction at the thought that she, too, had suffered even as had he. But when Stépane would have gone into particulars concerning Wronsky's conduct, Levine interrupted him. "I have no right," he said, "to learn these family secrets, nor do they interest me."

Stépane, who had marked the other's sudden change from gayety to sadness, smiled quietly, but said nothing more.

During the remainder of the evening, Levine was somewhat *distract* and out of sorts. There was still one question which he wished to ask Stépane, and yet he could not bring himself to frame it. Stépane, for his part, pleased with himself for his afternoon's sport, and experiencing the satisfaction of a healthily tired man who has recruited himself with an excellent dinner, was content to enjoy his cigar in peace and quiet. It was not until he had escorted his guest to his bed-chamber before retiring that Levine at last spoke.

"And Wronsky—where is he now?" he asked, abruptly.

"Wronsky?" said Stépane, stifling a slight yawn. "He is in St. Petersburg. He left Moscow soon after you did, and has not been there since. Do you know, Kostia," he continued, as he lazily removed his coat, "if you care to hear what I think, you yourself are partly to blame for

what has happened. You took sudden fright at a rival, although, as I tell you once more, it was by no means certain whose chances were the better. You were certainly the first in the field, and—" He was interrupted by a yawn which he could not suppress.

"Does he, or does he not, know how far I went?" asked Levine of himself, watching his friend's face; but though he blushed slightly, he said nothing.

"If," Stépane resumed, "she expressed some preference for the other man, it was simply a superficial feeling, the attraction of his aristocratic and high position in the world—advantages which her mother was only too ready to dilate upon."

Levine frowned. The pain of his refusal came back to him fresh and distinct.

"One moment," he interrupted. "You speak of aristocracy—will you tell me in what Wronsky's aristocracy consists, and how it can account for her repulsing me? You look upon him as an aristocrat. I do not agree with you. A man whose father rose from the gutter through intrigue, whose mother has had a *liaison* with God knows whom! Oh, no! The true aristocrats, in my mind, are those men who can show three or four generations of honest and upright ancestors, who belong to the most highly cultured classes—I do not say intellectual, that is another question—who have never toadied to any one, and who have never asked a favor of any man; such, in short, as my own father and grandfather. I appreciate what they have bequeathed to me, and what gives me work to do, and I say to you that it is we who are the aristocrats, not those who live at the expense of those in power, and who can be bought at any time for twenty kopecks!"

"I entirely agree with you," said Stépane, laughing at the other's words, and the evident sincerity in which he spoke them. "Perhaps you are a little unjust as regards Wronsky; but that is neither here nor there. I tell you frankly: were I in your place, I would go to Moscow and—"

"No. I don't know if you are aware of what actually happened, and, so far as that goes, it matters little to me. I proposed to Catherine Alexandrovna, and was refused in such a manner as to cause me much pain and humiliation."

"Why? What folly on her part!"

"We will say no more about it. You must forgive me for having kept anything back from you. Now everything is explained."

And taking up his candle from the table, he added, holding out his hand to his friend:

"You would not wish me to go now, Stiva, I am sure; and I am also sure that you will not let it cause any restraint or ill-feeling between us."

"Most certainly not. I am only too glad that we have had this explanation. Good-night, Kostia, good-night!"

CHAPTER VII.

WRONSKY, although entirely absorbed by his passion, had made no outward change in his daily life. He was careful to preserve his relations in the two worlds wherein he had hitherto existed—the social and the military worlds. It need hardly be said that he was not the kind of man to talk about his love affairs. Never—no matter in what company, nor how much wine he might have consumed—did he allow a word to pass his lips, nor would he permit the slightest allusion to be made to them in his presence. Yet this passion was his whole existence. For one thing he was especially envied by his younger associates—the high position in society of Madame Karénine; but this very fact, perhaps, was what weighed most heavily upon his mind.

As for the women, most of the younger ones, being jealous of Anna, were secretly delighted to see their predictions verified. Formerly they had been wearied with hearing her spoken of as a model of rectitude and morality, and now each one of them was holding in reserve the mud with which they would sooner or later bespatter her. The more elderly of her acquaintances, and those of the highest rank, saw with regret the brewing of an immense scandal.

At first Wronsky's mother had heard with a certain satisfaction of her son's *liaison*; nothing, from her point of view, was so well fitted to "form" a young man as an *affaire* with a woman of high birth and station. She experienced, too, no little pleasure in discovering that, after all, Anna was much like the other women of her own set. But this condoning view taken by the countess was alto-

gether changed when she learned that her son, in order to remain near Madame Karénine, had refused a military exchange which would have materially advanced his career. Now she felt prepared to see him commit any foolishness at any moment. Since his sudden departure from Moscow, so soon after her own arrival there, she had not seen him, and finally sent word to him through his elder brother, who was also displeased with the *liaison*, that she desired a visit from him.

In addition to his liking for society and for army life, Wronsky had one great passion, and that was for horses. Some regimental races were shortly to take place. He subscribed to one race—a steeple-chase—and entered a purchase he had recently made—an English thorough-bred mare. In spite of his absorption in his love, the idea of racing was still attractive to him. He felt, indeed, that some such excitement was necessary to counteract the violent emotions of his passion for Anna.

The morning of the day on which the races were to take place arrived, and Wronsky's thoughts were full of the rendezvous which Anna had given him for an hour when the races should be over. For three days he had not seen her, and, hearing that her husband had just returned to St. Petersburg from abroad, he was troubled in his mind as to whether she would be able to keep the appointment. As he sat at his breakfast he determined that he would call upon her at all risks, and so assure himself.

"I will simply say," he thought to himself, "that I am charged with a message from Betsy as to their meeting on the race-course. Yes, I am determined; I will take the risk."

Anna was now staying at a country residence of her husband's, some few miles from the city; and Wronsky, having hired a private carriage, set out at once.

He dismounted some short distance from the house, so as to attract as little attention as possible, and entered the grounds on foot.

"Has your master arrived?" he asked a gardener.

"Not yet, sir; but madame is at home, I think. If you will ring at the gate they will open to you."

"No; I prefer entering by the garden."

Knowing that Anna was alone, he wished to surprise her, for he knew that she would not expect him on account

of the coming races. He walked quietly along a small path which led to the house, raising his sword with one hand so that its clatter should not be heard.

Anna was sitting alone upon the terrace, awaiting the return of her young son Serge from his morning walk. She did not hear Wronsky's approach. She sat, resting her head upon her jeweled hands, lost in reverie and apparent sadness. The beauty of her face and figure struck Wronsky—as, indeed, they did each time he saw her.

“What is the matter?” he asked. “Are you ill?”

“No; I am very well,” she answered, rising, and pressing the hand he held out to her. “I did not expect you.”

“Your hands—how cold they are!”

“You startled me a little. I was alone, waiting for Serge to come back from his walk.”

In spite of her assumed calm, her lips were trembling.

“You must forgive me for coming; but I could not pass the whole day without seeing you.”

“There is nothing to forgive; it only makes me too happy.”

“But you are ill—or feeling sad?” he said, still holding her hand as he leaned over her. “What were you thinking of?”

“The same thing that I am always thinking of,” she answered, with a little smile. She spoke truly; at any hour or minute of the day, had she been asked of what her thoughts were, the true answer would have been of her happiness and her misfortune. At the very moment of his coming she had been wondering to herself how others, such as the Princess Betsy, could accept so lightly the burden of their own *liaisons*; her own she found a cruel burden.

They spoke of the races, and Wronsky strove to raise her spirits by giving her a full account of the race he was to ride in, and his hopes of winning it.

“Shall I, or shall I not, tell him?” she asked herself, covering him with her caressing glance. “He seems so happy and so full of the sport before him, perhaps he would not understand the importance of what has happened.”

“You have not yet told me of what you were thinking when I came,” he said, interrupting her thoughts. “Tell me, please.”

Still she made no answer. In her beautiful eyes was a look of questioning; her hands idly played with a leaf she had plucked from a bush near by.

Wronsky's own face was full of passionate worship and devotion. "I am sure something has happened. How can you expect me to bear the thought of your having a grief which I do not share? Speak, for God's sake!" he repeated in a beseeching tone.

"If he does not see the importance of what I have to say," she thought, "I could never forgive him. Perhaps it would be better for me to run no risk."

"What is it?" she asked again.

"Must I tell you?"

"Yes, yes!"

"I am *enceinte*," she whispered, gently.

The leaf which she held between her fingers trembled still more, but her eyes did not leave his; she sought to read in his face how her words affected him.

He grew suddenly pale, and appeared as if about to speak; but no words came. He lowered his head, and allowed the hand which he held between his own to drop.

"Yes, he understands all that it means," she thought, and, in her turn, took his hand.

But she erred in thinking that he felt as she herself did. Hearing this news, a strange feeling of horror came upon him, and he understood that the crisis had arrived. Henceforth it would be impossible to further deceive the husband, and they must extricate themselves, no matter at what price, from this odious and unbearable condition of affairs.

When, at last, he made answer, his words were:

"Neither you nor I have looked upon our *liaison* and love for each other as a transient happiness. Now our future is fixed: we must put an end to the lying deceit in which we have been living—it is absolutely necessary."

"Put an end to it? How can we do so, Alexis?" she asked, quietly.

"You must leave your husband, and our existence must be united."

"Is it not already united?" she said in a low tone.

"No—not completely."

"But what shall we do, Alexis? Tell me," she said in



a sad, almost ironical tone, thinking of her own inextricable situation. "Am I not his wife?"

"However difficult the situation, there is always some way of solving it if one acts decisively. Anything would be better than the life you are at present leading. Can I not see how everything is torture to you—your husband, your son, the world—everything!"

"Not my husband," she said, with a smile. "I no longer know him; I never think of him; I ignore his very existence."

"That is not so. I know you too well. You torment yourself on his account."

"But he knows nothing," she replied; and suddenly her whole face, even her neck, became suffused with a deep blush and the tears started to her eyes. "Do not let us speak of him."

It was not the first time that Wronsky had been struck with the difficulty of making her understand her own position. More than once it had seemed to him as if she were influenced by sentiments which she either could not or would not explain, and that in place of the real Anna there appeared a strange, mysterious being, unintelligible, almost repulsive to him.

Now the time had come when he would speak plainly.

"Whether he knows or does not know, is immaterial," he said in a quiet, firm tone. "We can not, *you* certainly can not, remain in this situation—now, least of any time."

"What ought we to do, then, in your opinion?" Anna asked, with the same touch of irony. She who had been so fearful of his receiving her news too lightly was now inclined to find fault with the energetic resolution he displayed.

"Acknowledge everything and leave him."

"Supposing I were to do so, do you know what the result would be? I will tell you," and her eyes, so tender a few moments ago, were filled with a wicked light. "'Ah! you love another and have been guilty of a criminal *liaison*?' " she said, imitating exactly her husband's voice and speech. "'I warned you, some time ago, what the consequences would be, from the point of view of religion, of society, and of family ties. You would not listen to me, and now—now I will not bring shame upon my own name

and that of—’” She was about to say “my son,” but stopped short, at the thought of Serge. “In a word, he would tell me that he refused to give me my liberty, but would take measures to avoid a scandal. He is not a man, he is a machine—and a cruel one, too, when he chooses to be.”

“But, Anna,” said Wronsky, quietly, hoping to convince and, at the same time, to calm her, “it would be better to avow everything at once, and then we shall know how to act.”

“We should have to run away.”

“And why not? It is impossible to live on like this. It is not a question of myself, but of you, who are suffering.”

“To fly, and to openly become your mistress!” she said in a bitter tone.

“Anna!” he cried, pained beyond hearing at her words.

“Yes, your mistress; and to lose—everything!” She would have said—her son—but again the word refused to come.

Wronsky was incapable of understanding that her strong and loyal nature accepted the false situation in which she found herself without seeking for release. When Anna pictured to herself what the life of her child would be when she had left the father, the horror of the thought overcame her.

“I beg you,” she said, her voice again tender and sincere, “do not again speak of this.”

“But, Anna—”

“No, no; let me think the situation over. I understand all its baseness and horror; but it is not so easy to change everything as you imagine. Have confidence in me, and do not speak of it again. You promise me?”

“I promise everything; but how can you expect me to be at ease after what you have told me? How can I be calm when you are in such distress?”

“I?” she repeated. “Well, it is true; but it will all pass away if you will speak no more of it. I know,” she added, “how your loyal nature suffers from this deceit. I often tell myself that you have sacrificed your whole life for my sake.”

“That is just it. I can never forgive myself for having made you unhappy.”



“I—unhappy?” she said, rising, and looking on him with eyes full of love. “Why, I am like a starving beggar to whom food has been given, and who forgets his rags and the bitter cold. Unhappy! No; there is my happiness;” and the voice of little Serge was heard as he came across the garden toward the house.

Anna quickly approached Wronsky, and taking his head in her two hands, brought down his face to hers, and kissed him tenderly on the lips and eyes; then she pushed him gently from her and walked quickly toward the house.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE parade in front of the grand stand, and the preliminary canter of the horses engaged in the great steeplechase were over, and the competitors had reached the starting-post in readiness for the race.

Three times had there been a false start. The colonel of the regiment, who held the starter’s flag, was becoming impatient at the delay; but when it fell for the fourth time, the horses broke away in even rank.

“They are off! Here they come!” was the cry from the crowded stand, and each spectator pressed forward in eagerness to catch sight of the field.

Frou-Frou, Wronsky’s mare, fractious and nervous, lost considerable ground at the start, but Wronsky soon steadied her and swept by those in front of him until he was only headed by the favorite, Gladiator, ridden by an officer named Maholine, whom he intensely disliked, and the good-looking English mare Diana, carrying Prince Kouzlof. For the first few minutes he had small control over his mount. Gladiator and Diana took the first water-jump with an easy bound, Frou-Frou following them as if borne on wings. At the next jump, which was cleared by Gladiator in the same easy fashion, Diana and her rider fell, and it was by a miracle that Wronsky saved himself from jumping on to the struggling man and horse. Then he obtained full mastery over the mare, and held her back behind Maholine, nursing her for the grand effort of the jump in front of the grand stand. At this point the emperor, his staff, and the crowd of fashionables were viewing the race. As they approached it, Wronsky could see nothing but the horse and rider in front of him. and

through the din of shouts and applause the only sound which reached his ears was the clatter of Gladiator's hoofs. Maholine cleared the jump and disappeared beyond it. Frou-Frou, in her excitement, jumped too soon, and struck the topmost fence-rail, though without losing ground. When once more on the level, Frou-Frou seemed to put her best effort forward, and rapidly overhauling Gladiator, was soon at his neck. Then in a few strides she passed him, though Wronsky, as he flashed by, caught sight of a satisfied smile on Maholine's face, and knew that the latter, content to take the second place, was pressing him closely in the rear.

The next two obstacles, a ditch and a fence, were safely passed, and, to Wronsky's delight, Frou-Frou drew considerably ahead of the rival behind her.

Wronsky was filled with delight; now he felt sure of winning. He would have turned in his saddle and looked round, but dared not relax his attention for a single instant. The next jump was the hardest of all—a stone wall, or "Irish" fence. "Once over that," he thought, "and we are sure to win." As they approached it, he noticed that the mare seemed to hesitate for a moment. He felt her mouth with the reins, and knew at once that she was prepared for what was expected of her. He gave her her head, and without an effort she cleared the obstacle without any difficulty, landing far on the other side, and keeping her stride.

"Bravo, Wronsky!" he heard some one cry; and he could distinguish the voice of a friend, Yashvine, who stood, with a large crowd, about the jump. His thoughts went back to Gladiator, who had safely cleared the fence, and was close behind him.

But one more jump remained—a hedge with a broad ditch beyond. Eager to increase his lead, Wronsky began to push the mare. She was almost exhausted; her breath was coming in short gasps, and the sweat poured from her neck and shoulders. They were over the jump almost before he knew it, Frou-Frou skimming over it like a bird; but before they touched the ground, he felt, to his horror, that he had lost his seat. What had happened? He could not tell, save that it was something terrible. Maholine passed him like a flash. Wronsky's foot touched the ground, and he felt the mare sink under him. He had



barely time to remove his feet from the stirrups when she sunk completely down, making futile efforts to regain her feet; though Wronsky did not know it until later, by his false movement in the saddle as they took the jump, the mare had strained her back. He saw only one thing—Gladiator galloping away in the distance—while Frou-Frou lay upon the ground before him, breathing in short, hard gasps. Again and again, in answer to Wronsky's words and blows, she strove to rise; but all in vain.

"My God!" thought Wronsky, in despair, "what have I done? what have I done?" and a great humiliation came over him. A surgeon and a crowd of others ran toward him; but, almost to his disgust, he himself was safe and sound of limb.

The mare's spine was broken; she must be shot, was the verdict. Without a word or any answer to the many inquiries poured upon him, Wronsky walked away. He was in despair. For the first time in his life he was the victim of an accident for which he could bring no remedy, and for which he alone was to blame.

His friend Yashvine ran after him and led him to his dressing-room. After some time he became calmer and regained his self-possession, but for many a day the recollection of the race was one of his most painful and cruel memories.

CHAPTER IX.

THE relations between Karénine and his wife remained outwardly the same—to the eyes of those about him he seemed even more attentive than before.

When spring came he had made a short trip abroad, as was his usual custom, leaving Anna installed at their country house.

Since their conversation after the Princess Tverskoï's reception, there had been no further allusion to the subject, but his manner toward Anna became much colder, his usual tone more sarcastic even than before. "You would not confide in me when I invited it," he seemed to imply, "now it is for you to come to me of your own self." He could not see the absurdity of his conduct—perhaps because the situation was too terrible for him to analyze. He preferred to bury his affection for his wife

and his son at the bottom of his soul, as in a sealed cabinet; and toward the boy, too, his attitude was cold and unloving. He would not allow himself to reflect, and he did not reflect; but in spite of all, though he was without actual proof, he felt that he was being deceived, and suffered deeply.

Since his return from abroad to St. Petersburg he had visited his wife once or twice at their country-seat, but his official duties would not permit him to permanently reside there. On the day of the races he determined to leave the city early, go to Peterhof, and from there, with his wife, to the race-course.

Anna was standing before the mirror in her own room, completing her toilet, when the noise of wheels upon the graveled path reached her ears.

"It is rather early for Betsy to have come," she thought; and, looking out of the window, saw that the visitor was her husband.

"How awkward!" she said to herself. "Can he have come to stay?"

She thought of her next appointment with Wronsky, and the results which might be brought about by her husband's visit. Entirely dominated by the spirit of deceit which had lately come upon her, she hurriedly descended the stairs to receive him, and commenced to speak, scarce knowing what she said.

"How nice of you to come!" she said, with a smile, extending her hand to Karénine. "I trust you are going to remain all night." For her life she could not have suppressed these words. "Of course you will come to the races. How sorry I am that I promised to go with Betsy!"

Karénine made a slight grimace at the mention of the name.

"Oh, I would not dream of separating the two inseparables," he said in a mocking tone. "The doctor has ordered me to take exercise. I will walk part of the way at least."

"But there is no hurry," said Anna. "Will you have some tea? and she rang the bell. "And how is your health?" she asked, speaking simply and naturally, though somewhat quickly. "You are not looking quite yourself."

"No; the doctor called on me this morning, taking up a full hour of my time. My health, you see, is so precious!"

"What did he say?" and she commenced to question him about his health and his official work, pressing him to take rest, and to settle in the country for a time. There was nothing out of the common in this conversation, and yet, when Anna recalled it later, the memory caused her actual pain.

"It is getting late," she said, at last, looking at her watch. "I wonder why Betsy does not come?"

"By the way," said Karénine, "I have brought you some money. I am sure you must need some; one can not support the household on nightingale's songs!"

"No—yes—I certainly do need some," said Anna, blushing to the roots of her hair. "But you will come back after the races?"

"Oh, yes," he answered. "And here comes the glory of Peterhof, the Princess Tverskoï!" he added as he saw the English victoria coming up the drive. "What elegance! How charming! Well, I will set out myself."

The princess did not leave her carriage.

"I must go now," said Anna. "Good-bye"—giving her hand again to her husband—"I am so glad you have come."

Karénine bent and kissed the hand.

"*Au revoir!*" she cried, going from the room with a bright and joyous air. But no sooner had the door closed upon her than a shudder of repugnance passed over her as she felt the kiss upon her hand.

CHAPTER X.

WHEN Karénine appeared upon the race-course, Anna was already seated by the Princess Betsy's side in the portion of the grand stand reserved for the officers and their friends. She saw her husband while he was yet some distance away, and followed him with her eyes as he threaded his way among the crowd of fashionables. As he approached the stand, he exchanged salutations on all sides, varying his cordiality and greeting in accordance with the rank of those he addressed.

"He thinks of nothing," she said to herself, "but his own ambition and political success; his elevated views upon morals and religion are nothing but the means to an end—nothing more."

She could see that he was in search of her but had not yet seen her, and she herself made no sign of having discovered his presence.

"Alexis Alexandrovitch," cried the Princess Betsy, "do you not see your wife? She is here."

His usual cold smile crossed his lips.

"It is so brilliant here," he said, approaching them, "that one's eyes are dazzled and blinded."

He smiled at Anna as a husband does who has but just left his wife, and saluted Betsy and the men and women round about her, most of whom he was acquainted with. A great general was standing near the balcony. Karénine greeted him, and they commenced a short discussion on the merits of horse-racing as an amusement. His harsh and measured tones sounded disagreeably on Anna's ears.

When the time for the steeple-chase came she leaned forward and gave her whole attention to watching Wronsky. She saw him exchange some last words with his trainer, and then mount his horse, and, in her nervousness, her husband's voice sounded odious to her. "I am a lost and wicked woman," she thought; "but I hate deceit—to me it is unbearable, while *he* thrives upon it. He sees everything and knows what is going on—how he can talk and act with such tranquillity! If he killed me, or killed Wronsky, one might respect him; but no, he prefers this acting and pretense, and to observe the proprieties." She did not understand her husband, nor could she know that his volubility, which irritated her so acutely, was simply the outcome of his inward agitation. He sought some means to stifle the ideas which oppressed him in his wife's presence, and to deafen his ears to the repeated sound of Wronsky's name on the lips of those around him.

"Princess, a bet with you!" cried a voice, addressing Betsy. It was Stépane Arcadieitch. "Whom will you back?"

"Anna and I are backing Kouzlof," she answered.

"I will back Wronsky for a pair of gloves."

"Agreed—done!"

The next moment the starting flag was seen to fall and conversation ceased.

Alexis Karénine stood silently and watched, not the horses and their gayly colored riders, but his wife's face. Pale and serious, Anna watched the race intently. She nervously grasped the fan in her hand, and hardly seemed to breathe. Her husband could read only too clearly that which he would fain have ignored. When Kouzlof fell there was a general movement of excitement and sympathy, but the triumphant look on Anna's face showed that her thoughts were undisturbed by the accident, and so it was when a second rider had a more dangerous fall and many thought that he was killed, her face showed no emotion.

But when it came to Wronsky's turn, as has been described, amid the general excitement Anna's cry of horror was almost unnoticed. Her face, however, expressed only too plainly the agitation which decorum compelled her to conceal. She strove to rise, and, turning toward Betsy, exclaimed, "Let us go! let us go!"

But the princess did not hear. She was questioning an officer who stood near.

Karénine came toward his wife and offered her his arm.

"Let us go, if you wish it," he said; but Anna turned away as though she had not seen him, and listened to what was being said to Betsy.

"They say he has broken his leg; but that is absurd."

Paying no heed to her husband, Anna continued to look through her field-glass toward the spot where Wronsky had fallen; the distance and the crowd around him were so great she could distinguish nothing. She lowered her glass and was about to move away when an officer galloped up to make a report to the emperor.

"Stiva! Stiva!" she cried, catching sight of her brother; but her cry did not reach him.

"I am offering you my arm, if you desire to go," repeated Karénine, as he touched her hand.

Anna shrunk back with a movement of repulsion, and answered, without looking at him:

"No, no; leave me! I will stay here!"

Another officer had ridden across the field from the

jump, and was telling Betsy that the rider was safe and sound, though the horse's back was broken.

At this news, Anna sunk back and hid her face behind her fan. Karénine could see that not only was she in tears, but that she could not repress the sobs which convulsed her frame. He placed himself in front of her to shield her from the curiosity of the crowd, and to allow her time to recover herself.

"For the third time, I offer you my arm," he said, after some moments, turning round to her.

Anna looked at him, not knowing what to say, when Betsy came to her rescue.

"No, no, Alexis; I brought Anna here, and will take her home."

"Excuse me, princess," he answered, smiling politely, and looking her full in the face, "but I see that Anna is suffering, and I wish to take her away myself."

Anna, frightened into submission, rose and took her husband's arm.

"I will send you news," whispered the Princess Betsy.

Karénine and Anna left the pavilion, he talking naturally to the acquaintances they chanced to meet, and she obliged to listen and to answer as one in a dream.

"Is he hurt? Or was what that man said true?" she thought. "Will he come to me? Shall I see him to-night?"

Silently they entered the carriage and were soon driven beyond the crowd. In spite of all that he had seen, Karénine would not yet allow himself to judge his wife. In his mind, outward appearances were of small importance. He felt that he must say something; but when the words did come, they were the opposite of what he would have said.

"How fond we all are of seeing these cruel sights! I have often remarked—"

"I beg your pardon, I don't understand," interrupted Anna in a tone which irritated and displeased him.

"I wish to say," he went on, "that your behavior to-day has been hardly correct."

"In what?" she asked, turning quickly toward him and looking him in the face, no longer with the false cheerfulness under which she was wont to hide her feelings, but with an assurance which ill concealed her affright.



"I will tell you," he said, raising the window of the carriage.

"What have you seen that was not correct?" she repeated.

"The distress you openly showed when one of the riders fell."

He awaited her answer; but she was silent and looked straight before her.

"I have already begged you to conduct yourself before the world in such a manner as to protect yourself from gossiping tongues. There was a time when I used the relations which should exist between us as an argument; I do not do so now. It is now a single question of outward facts. You have not behaved with propriety, and I desire that it shall not happen again."

His words hardly reached Anna's ears. Her thoughts were still of Wronsky, and whether he could have been seriously hurt. It was hard to believe that he was uninjured, when the horse's back was broken. She glanced at Karénine with an ironical smile, and made no answer. The smile caused him to fall into a strange error.

"She is smiling at my suspicions," he thought. "She is going to tell me, as before, that they are absurd and without the least foundation."

The intense desire, perhaps, was to father to the thought. So great was his dread of having his fears confirmed that he was willing and prepared to believe anything.

"Perhaps I have been deceived," he said. "In that case, I must ask your pardon."

"No," she said, quietly, with one desperate glance at the impassive figure of her husband. "You have not been deceived. I was distressed, and am so still. I have heard what you said. I have been thinking only of him. I love him—I am his mistress; I can not tolerate you: I fear you and I hate you. Do with me whatever you will;" and, sinking back in her seat, she covered her face with her hands and burst into sobs.

Alexis Karénine did not move, nor did he change the direction of his looks, but the grave expression of his features became fixed as if in the rigidity of death, and so remained during the remainder of the drive. As they approached the house, he turned to Anna, and said:

"Let us understand each other. I insist that until I

shall have taken the necessary measures"—and here his voice trembled—"to protect my honor, measures of which you shall be informed, I insist that appearances and decency shall be preserved."

He left the carriage and helped Anna to alight; in front of the servants, he pressed her hand, entered the carriage again, and was driven to St. Petersburg.

Hardly had he gone, when a messenger from Betsy arrived with a note:

"I have sent to him for news. He writes me that he is well and uninjured, but in despair."

"Then he *will* come," was Anna's thought. "I have done well in acknowledging everything."

She looked at her watch. There were yet some hours before he could arrive. The memory of their last meeting caused her heart to beat.

"My God!" she said to herself, "how I love him! My husband! Ah, yes! Well, so much the better; all is now over between us."

CHAPTER XI.

No one, not even those most intimate with him, would have suspected that Alexis Karénine, this cold and reasoning man, was prone to a weakness in absolute contradiction to the general tendency of his nature. He could not see a child or woman weep without losing all his *sang-froid*; the sight of their tears troubled and moved him to such a degree as to counteract all his other faculties.

When Anna, during their return from the races, had acknowledged her *liaison* with Wronsky, and, covering her face, had burst into tears, Karénine was unable to suppress a certain amount of pity. It was to conceal this weakness the more surely that he preserved the look of fixed rigidity upon his face. It was with an effort that, on leaving his wife, he displayed his customary politeness toward her. Her words had confirmed his worst suspicions, and she had increased his sense of injury by her tears. As he sat alone in his carriage, he almost experienced a feeling of relief. It seemed to him that now his doubts, his jealousy, his compassion, were all gone. He

had experienced the terrible suffering of doubt, but now it was all over.

"She is a lost woman," he said to himself, "heartless, and without honor or religious feeling. I have always known it, but, in pity, strove to blind my own eyes. I have committed a great error in joining my life to hers: but I am not to be blamed for the mistake, nor should I suffer for it. It is she who is to blame. Why should I be unhappy because my wife has committed a fault? I am not the first nor the last to find himself in such a situation;" and he recalled in his mind the names of several of his acquaintances and contemporaries who had been betrayed by their own wives. "Well," he thought, "after all these it is now my turn. The most important thing is to preserve my presence of mind and decide as to a future course." Naturally, his first idea was the advisability of a duel. He had always, from his youth upward, entertained a horror of this mode of settling wrongs. "If our society," he argued to himself, "were not still in a state of semi-savagery, the duel would not be tolerated. It is not, in England and many other countries. And to what would it lead, supposing I were to challenge him? Even were I to kill him, it could not re-establish my relations with my wife and son. Would it be honest on my part to challenge him, knowing, as I do, that my friends would not allow the risking of a life which at least is useful to the country? I should have the air of an impostor. No; my sole aim should be to keep my own reputation unsullied and suffer nothing to impede my career."

Always important in his eyes, the "service of the state" now seemed everything to him.

The idea of a duel discarded, there remained—divorce; and among the many instances which Karénine now called to mind he could remember none in which the end had been satisfactory. In each case the guilty party was the one to profit by the ability to establish new ties. Divorce broke off all relations between the husband and the wife, and left her to her lover. The actual proof which the law so brutally demands, he felt that it would be impossible for him to furnish. His enemies, too, would make profit by calumniating his name and smirching his reputation, and his aim, which was to extricate himself as quietly as possible from this crisis, would by no means be attained.

"No, no," he cried, moving nervously about the carriage, "it is impossible! Impossible! I can not be made unhappy, and they have no right to be happy."

Having reviewed in his mind the objections to the duel, to divorce, or to separation, Karénine convinced himself that his only plan was to guard his wife in concealing her fault from the world, to employ every imaginable means to break off her *liaison* with Wronsky, and—though this last he would not acknowledge to himself—to punish the guilty woman. "I will explain to her fully what she has done and in what position she has placed the family, and consent to keep her on the express condition that she ceases every relation with her lover. The time may come—for time solves most difficulties—when our former relations shall be re-established between us; she herself must go through much suffering; but why should I, who am entirely blameless, be made to suffer?"

When, having arrived at St. Petersburg, he found himself in the seclusion of his own library, Karénine, after nervously pacing the room for some time, sat down and wrote the following letter to his wife:

"At our last interview I expressed my intention of informing you as to my decision in regard to the subject of our conversation. After deep and serious reflection, I now fulfill my promise. My decision is this: Whatever your conduct may have been, I can not recognize my own right to break the ties consecrated by a supreme power. The family name must not be exposed to the effects of a caprice, of an arbitrary act, even though it may have consisted in a crime on the part of one of us, and our social life must remain the same. This should be so, on my account, on yours, and on that of your son. I am convinced that you have repented, that you are still repentant, and that you will assist me in destroying, while it is in the germ, the cause of our disagreement and in forgetting the past. Should you not do so, you can understand what the future will be for you and your son. I hope to talk more fully at our next meeting. As the summer is now nearly at an end, you will oblige me by returning to town as soon as possible—by Tuesday next at latest. I will see that all arrangements for your moving are attended to. I must beg you to notice that I attach particular im-

portance to what you have placed it in my power to demand.

A. KARENINE.

“P.S.—I inclose, with this letter, sufficient money to meet your requirements.”

He sealed the letter carefully and methodically and rang the bell.

“Give this letter,” he said to the servant, “to the courier, and tell him to carry it to your mistress to-morrow.”

CHAPTER XII.

THOUGH Anna, in speaking with Wronsky, had refused to admit that their position was false and dishonorable, she none the less felt at the bottom of her heart that he was right. She was eager to escape from such a deplorable existence, and when, impelled by her emotion, she had avowed everything to her husband, she experienced a great relief. After his departure she kept repeating to herself that, at least, everything was now explained, and that there would be no further necessity for lying and deceit. If her situation was still evil, it was no longer equivocal. And yet, when Wronsky came that night to see her, she said nothing to him of her confession to her husband, nor gave him any warning that they must decide on a new future.

The next morning, when she awoke, her first thought was of the words she had spoken to her husband. They now appeared so odious, in their strange brutality, that she could not understand how she had found the courage to pronounce them.

What would the result be?

Her husband had left her without any rejoinder.

“I have seen Wronsky since then,” she thought, “and have said nothing to him. When he left me I felt inclined to call him back, but thought of his astonishment at my not having told him at once. Why did I not?”

She blushed vividly, for she well knew that what had kept her silent was—shame. Now, her situation, which the previous evening had seemed lightened, was darker and more inestimable than ever. All sorts of foolish fears as to what her husband might do seized upon her.

Wronsky, she thought, no longer loved her as much as formerly, and was beginning to tire of her. Was she the one to force herself upon him? And there was a bitter feeling in her heart against him. Her confession to her husband seemed to her to have been made before all the world, to have been heard by every one. How could she face her own household, even?

She would not go down-stairs, but remained in her own room. "There is nothing to be gained by thinking," she said to herself. "I must go away. But where, when, and with whom? To-morrow, by the evening train?"

Yes, she would go, and take Serge and her maid, An-nouchka, with her. But first she must write to both men, and she sat down at the table to write to her husband.

"After what has passed, I can no longer live with you. I am going away, and take my son with me. I know nothing of the law, and so am ignorant as to which of us he should remain with; but I take him because I could not live without him. Be generous; let me keep him!"

Up to the last words she had written quickly and naturally; but the appeal to a generosity with which she did not credit her husband, and the necessity for framing some words of farewell, stayed her pen.

"I can not speak," she resumed, "of my fault and my repentance; it is on that account—"

She stopped again, unable to find words to express her thought.

"No," she said, "I will say nothing more;" and tearing up the paper, wrote another note, making no appeal to his generosity.

Her second letter was for Wronsky. "I have told my husband *everything*," she wrote, then stopped, unable to proceed. The words seemed so brutal, so entirely unfeminine. Besides, what had she to say to him. And this note, too, she tore into a thousand pieces. Better remain silent, she thought, closing her writing-desk; and then, summoning the governess and her maid, she told them of her departure for Moscow that evening and bid them make all preparations.

While attending to the little details of her own packing, Anna, in a slight measure, forgot her troubles. Her

maid, who was in the room, called her attention to the noise of a carriage approaching the house. From the window she saw her husband's courier at the front entrance.

"Go and see what it is," she said to Annouchka, and with her hands folded in her lap, sat waiting in her chair. A servant brought her a packet addressed in Karénine's own hand. "The courier has orders to wait for an answer," he said.

"Very well," she answered; and as soon as he had gone she tore open the envelope with a trembling hand. Some bank-notes fell from the cover; but she had only thoughts for the letter itself, which, in her impatience, she commenced to read from the end.

"I will see that all arrangements for your moving are attended to. . . . I attach particular importance to what you have placed it in my power to demand."

And then she read it through from the beginning to the end. When she had finished, she felt quite cold, and crushed by some terrible and unexpected misfortune.

That morning she had regretted her confession, and would have recalled her words if possible. Here was a letter written as though they had never been uttered, giving her all that she desired, and containing some lines which seemed worse to her than she could have imagined.

"He is right—right!" she exclaimed. "Is he not always right, always Christian-like and magnanimous? Oh, what a mean and contemptible man he is; and no one but myself understands or will understand him, and I can explain nothing. 'He is a religious man,' they say, 'a moral, honest, and intelligent man'; but they can not see what I see; they do not know that for eight years he has oppressed my life, stifled all that was alive in me. Has he ever looked upon me as a woman of flesh and blood, one who had need of being loved? No one knows how he has insulted me at every step, only to feel more satisfied with himself. Have I not tried my best to love him, and, when unsuccessful, have I not wrapped myself in my son? But the time came when I found that I could no longer deceive myself. It is not my fault if God has made me so—I must breathe and love. And now? If he would kill us both, one could pardon him; but no, he—can I not guess what he will do? He will continue, confident and

strong in his own rights, and I, poor wretch, will be still further lost. 'You can understand what the future will be for you and your son.' That is a threat to take away my boy, an act which I suppose the absurd laws authorize. I can see, though, why he says it. He knows that I will never abandon the child; that I could not live without him; and that, if I did abandon him, I should fall among the ranks of the lowest women. He knows that nothing could make me do that. 'Our life must remain the same.' It was torture before; now it is far worse. He knows that I can never repent or give my love to him, and that what he insists upon can only result in falseness and deceit. But he must prolong my torture; he swims in deceit as a fish does in the water. I will not give him this joy. I will break through the tissue of falsehood which surrounds me. My God! I will break through everything—everything!"

She approached the table as if to write another letter, but at the bottom of her soul she knew that she was powerless to change anything or to escape from the situation, however false, in which she found herself. She sat before the table, her head bent upon her arms, and commenced to cry like a child, the sobs bursting from her bosom.

She knew that it would never be her lot to love openly and in freedom; that she must always remain the woman to be blamed, always be in fear of detection and surprise, deceiving her husband for a man whose life she could never be a part. All this she knew, and yet, her destiny was too terrible for her to face; she must go blindly on.

The footstep of a servant startled her. She concealed her face, pretending that she was writing.

"The courier wishes to know if the answer is ready, madame."

"Yes; wait," she said, and wrote:

"I have received your letter.

ANNA."

"Give him this, and tell Annouchka that we do not go to Moscow to-night."

CHAPTER XIII.

WRONSKY received a line from Anna, bidding him come to her at five o'clock that evening. Hiring a carriage, he

ordered the coachman to drive at a good pace, and stretching himself at full length upon the seats, gave himself up to his own thoughts. They were not unpleasant. A smile came to his lips as he thought of the coming meeting with Anna. It was a cool, clear day in August, and the evening air seemed to invigorate him, and to stimulate his every sense. The sun was sinking toward the horizon, and the little details of country life which betokened the close of a day, pleased him as he looked out from the carriage window.

He bid the coachman, as usual, to wait outside the avenue, and passed on foot through the gates. No sooner had he entered the park than he saw Anna advancing toward him, her face covered with a thick veil. He quickened his pace, his heart beating with delight at sight of her, and they were soon face to face. She seized his hand.

"You must not be angry with me for asking you to come; it was absolutely necessary for me to see you," she said, and there was something in her face which repressed Wronsky's joy.

"I—angry with you?" he exclaimed in astonishment.

"Come; I want to talk to you," she said, passing her arm through his.

He saw at once that something new and unexpected had occurred, and that their talk was not to be altogether a pleasant one.

"What is it?" he asked, seeking to read her face.

She made a few steps in silence and then suddenly stopped.

"I did not tell you last night," she commenced, speaking rapidly but as if with an effort, "that, as I returned from the races with Alexis Alexandrovitch, I told him everything, told him that I could no longer be his wife—everything, in fact."

He listened, bending toward her as if he would have softened the bitterness of this confidence; but as soon as she had spoken, she drew herself erect and her face bore a proud and stern expression.

"Yes, yes," he said; "it was a thousand times better. I know what you must have been suffering."

But she did not listen to his words; she was trying to read her lover's thoughts. How was she to know that his

looks, on hearing this news, were controlled by what at once suggested itself—the duel, which, in his mind, was now inevitable? No, Anna never for a moment dreamed of this, and her reading of his face was a very different one.

Since reading her husband's letter she felt that all must remain as before; that she would never have the strength to sacrifice her position in the world, or her little son, for the sake of her lover. Nevertheless, she had attached a great importance to this interview with Wronsky, and hoped that it might bring about some change in their situation. If, at the first moment and without hesitation, he had said: "Leave everything and come with me," she would even have abandoned her child. But he made no such move, and it seemed to her that he was annoyed and displeased.

"Oh, no, I have not suffered," she said in a tone of irritation. "Look at this," and she drew from her glove her husband's letter.

"I understand! I understand!" interrupted Wronsky, taking the letter, though without reading it, and striving to calm Anna. "This was all that I desired in order to devote my whole life to your happiness."

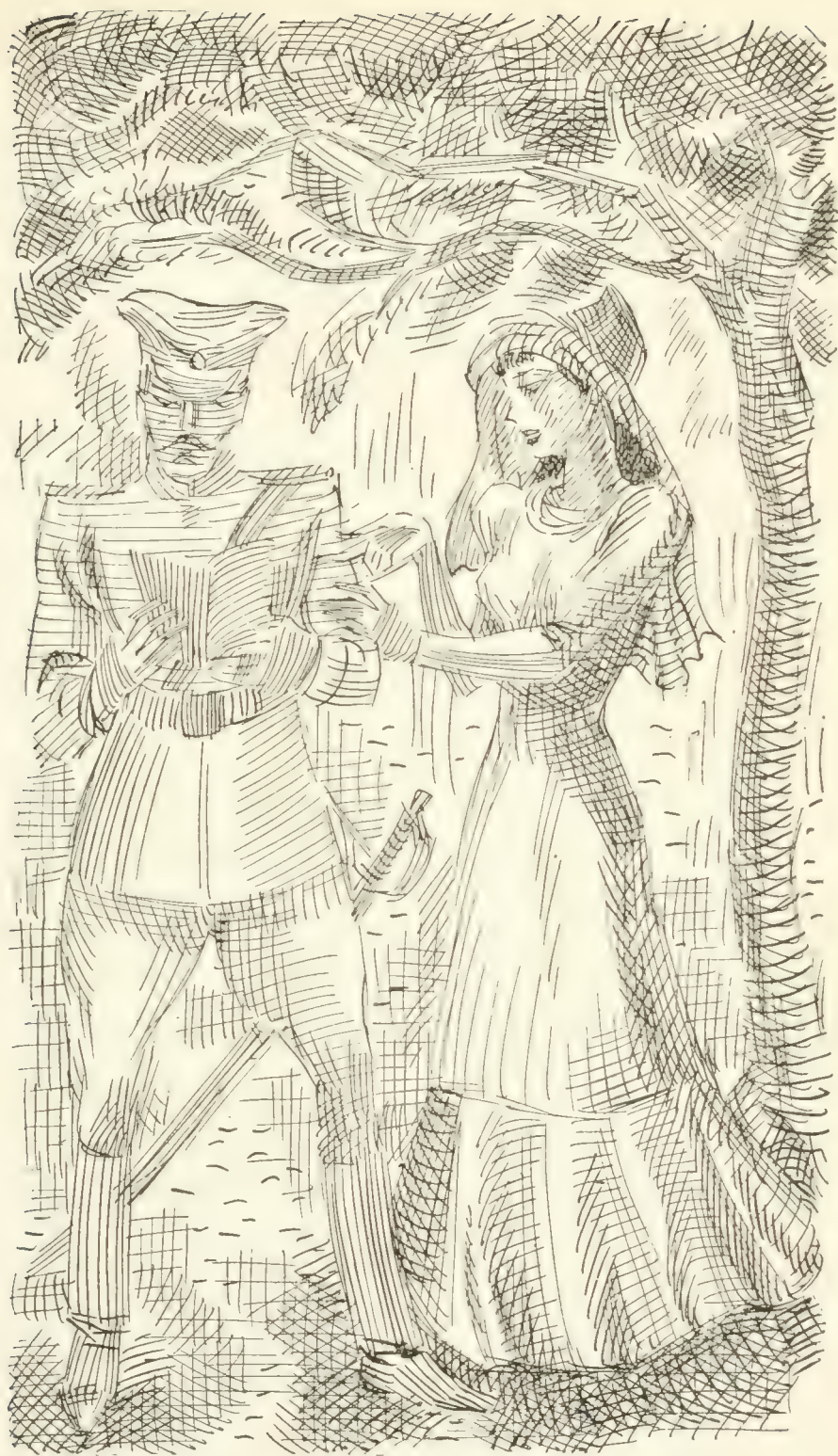
"Why say that? How could I doubt it?" she said. "If I did doubt—" and she paused for a few moments. "I repeat," she began again, "throughout this whole affair I have never doubted you. But read what he has written to me."

As he read the letter, the same impression came back to Wronsky that he had had on hearing of Anna's rupture with her husband. He foresaw the provocation and subsequent challenge he would receive, and himself face to face with his adversary, calm and cold, discharging his weapon in the air and awaiting the other's fire.

When he had finished reading he looked at her with an expression of indecision in his eyes. She concluded that he had reflected, and, no matter what his words might be, that they would not express his real thoughts; her last hope vanished.

"You see what sort of a man he is," she said in a trembling voice.

"Pardon me," said Wronsky, seeing the difficulty of expressing his thoughts. "This does not alter anything;



it is impossible, whatever he may think, for things to remain as they are."

"And why?" asked Anna in a strangely altered voice. His answer would mean little to her; she felt that her fate was decided.

What Wronsky wished to say was that the duel, which he himself deemed inevitable, would change everything; but his actual words were quite different.

"This can not continue. I hope, now, that you will consent to leave him, and that you will permit me"—here he blushed and hesitated—"to arrange for our life together. To-morrow—"

She did not allow him to finish.

"And my child? You see what he has written? I should have to leave him. I can not, nor do I wish it."

"But, in Heaven's name, would it not be better to leave your son than to remain in this humiliating position?"

"For whom is it humiliating?"

"For all; but for you especially."

"Humiliating! Do not say that; the word implies nothing to me," she said, her voice still low and trembling. "Do you not understand that from the day I first commenced to love you life itself was changed for me. In my eyes, nothing exists outside your love. If I can always have it, I shall stand on a height where nothing can reach me. I am proud of my position because—" She could not finish her sentence; the tears of shame and despair stifled her voice.

He also was deeply affected, and for the first time in his life felt as if the tears would come, though hardly knowing what moved him: whether it was pity for her whom he was powerless to aid and whose trouble he had caused, or the consciousness that he himself had committed a grievous and bad action.

"Then a divorce would be impossible?" he said in a quiet tone. She bent her head without replying. "Could you not leave him and take the child with you?"

"Yes; but everything depends upon him now. I must go back to him," she said in a dry tone. Her presentiment was verified; everything must remain as in the past.

"I shall be in St. Petersburg on Tuesday," he said, "and we will decide then."

"Yes," she answered; "but do not speak of that." She bid him farewell and they parted.

CHAPTER XIV.

WHEN Karénine awoke on the Tuesday morning, his first thought was of a triumph he had won in the Council the previous evening. When he commenced his labors for the day, he was so completely absorbed in his work that he forgot it was the date which he had appointed for his wife's return to St. Petersburg. He was, therefore, disagreeably surprised when a servant informed him of her arrival. He could not, at that moment, receive her in person, for he was engaged with the chief of his staff on business of importance.

Having advised him of her arrival, Anna went straight to her own apartments, and, while superintending the unpacking of her things, expected each moment to hear her husband announced. An hour passed, and yet he did not appear. Anna, impatient, passed into the dining-room, which adjoined his library, and gave some orders to the servants in a voice loud enough to penetrate the sanctum where he sat. Still there was no sign of him, and presently she heard him conducting his subordinate to the front door. She knew that, after that, his invariable custom was to leave the house for a time; and, intent upon seeing him and deciding the future, she determined to enter his study.

Karénine was sitting at a table in full official uniform, as if on the point of starting out, and looking straight before him with a look of sadness in his eyes. She saw him before he noticed her entrance, and knew that his thoughts were of her. When he did perceive her he moved nervously in his seat, and then, rising abruptly, walked forward to meet her, looking over her head, as if to avoid her eyes. He took her hand and invited her to sit down.

"I am glad to see you home again," he simply said, for no other words would come to him.

Nor, for her part, was Anna able to speak to him as she had planned. She could only keep silent and pity him.

"And Serge—is he well?" said Karénine at last; and then, without waiting for an answer, "I shall not dine at home; I must go out at once."

"I had wished to go to Moscow," said Anna.

"No, it was much, very much better for you to return here," he replied; and again there was silence for some moments.

Anna was the first to break it.

"Alexis Alexandrovitch," she said, looking straight into his face, "I am a wicked and guilty woman; but I still remain what I was—what I confessed to you that I was—and I have come to tell you that I can not change."

"I do not ask you about that," he replied, also in a decided tone, his face full of anger and dislike. "I supposed it was so; but what I wrote to you I now repeat. I am not obliged to acknowledge it, and I wish to ignore it. I will know nothing so long as the world is kept in ignorance and my name is not dishonored. That is why I have informed you that our relations toward each other must outwardly remain the same as they have heretofore been. I shall only allow my honor to be smirched in case you compromise yourself."

"But our relations can not remain as they were," said Anna, timidly, and with a frightened glance at him.

Finding him so calm in his manner, his voice and look unchanged, all the pity for him that had sprung up within her disappeared, and a feeling of repulsion took its place. Of one thing only was she afraid—her own inability to express sufficiently clearly what their future relations must be.

"I can not be your wife when I—"

Karénine interrupted her with a cold and bitter smile.

"The sort of life which you have lately been pleased to adopt influences your understanding. I have too much respect for the past and too great a distrust of the present to warrant the interpretation which you put upon my words."

Anna sighed and bent her head.

"Still," he continued, "I can hardly understand how you, having found nothing blamable in announcing your infidelity to your husband, should have any scruples concerning your duties as a wife."

"Alexis Alexandrovitch, what do you demand of me?"

"I demand that you shall not see this man again. I demand that you shall so conduct yourself that neither the outside world nor our own families shall be able to accus-

you of anything. It seems to me that this is very little to demand. Now, I have nothing further to say. I must go, and, as I told you, shall not dine at home."

L. rose and walked toward the door. Anna rose also. He bowed to her without a word, making room for her to pass out first.

PART THIRD.

CHAPTER I.

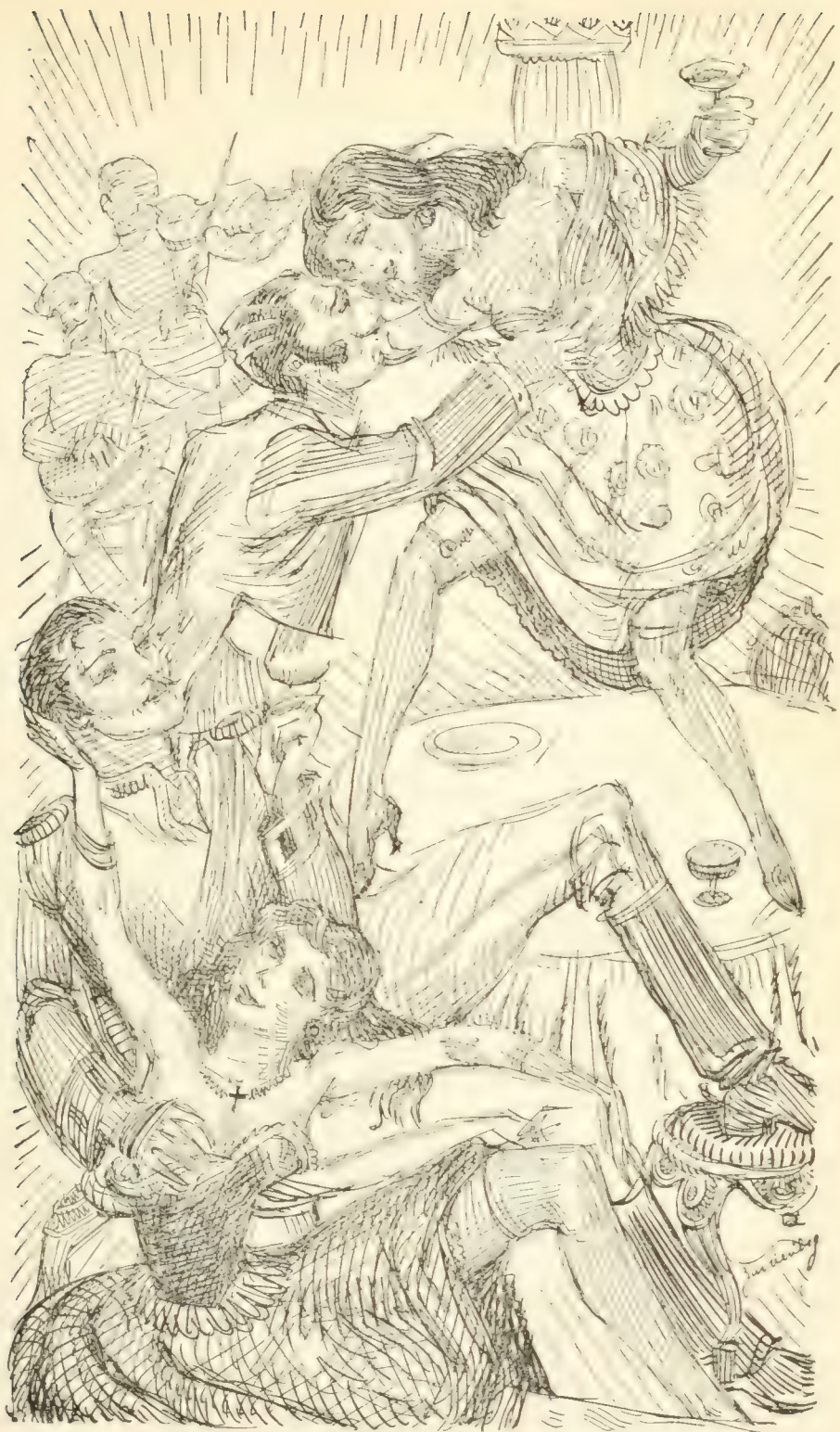
THE Karénines continued to live under the same roof, to meet each other every day, and yet were virtual strangers. The husband constantly showed himself in his wife's company before the servants, so as to avoid their gossip, but he rarely dined at home. Wronsky never appeared at the house. Anna met him at other places, and Karénine knew it.

All three found the situation intolerable, nor could they have submitted to it had each not thought it merely temporary. Karénine was waiting for the entanglement to die out, by a natural death, before his own honor had been openly sullied. Anna, the cause of all the evil, and the one who suffered most from it, lived in the conviction of an approaching crisis. As for Wronsky, he had ended by thinking as she did.

One afternoon Wronsky returned to his rooms, fatigued and out of sorts. He had been deputed by the highest authorities to act as cicerone to a foreign prince who was visiting St. Petersburg. The prince was a man whose tastes and inclinations were confined to gayety and dissipation when absent from his own country, and Wronsky had been forced for some days to conduct his royal *protégé* from one gilded pleasure to another—an occupation, at the present time, most distasteful to him.

He found a note from Anna.

"I am unwell and very unhappy," she wrote. "I can not leave the house, and must see you. Come to me this evening. Alexis Alexandrovitch will be at the Council from seven o'clock until ten."



Knowing, as he did, the strict injunctions Karénine had laid upon his wife, this invitation, in direct defiance of them, seemed strange to Wronsky, but yet he decided to go to her.

He lay down to rest himself, and, tired out, was soon asleep. It was quite dark when he awoke with a sudden start, and looking at his watch, he saw that it was not far from nine o'clock. He called his valet, dressed with great haste, and hurried toward the Karénine mansion.

As he approached the house, he saw that Anna's carriage was standing before the door. "She was going to my rooms," he thought; "it would have been far better." He mounted the steps and rang. The door was immediately opened by the Swiss footman, and before he had time to open his mouth, Karénine, who was leaving the house, almost ran into his arms. He was in full evening dress; he looked straight into Wronsky's eyes, who could see the worn and sad look in his face, raised his hat slightly, and passed down the steps to the carriage.

"What a situation!" thought Wronsky, entering the anteroom, his eyes full of anger. "It makes it seem as if I came here, to his own house, to deceive him, and I am far from wishing to do that."

He entered the salon where Anna was awaiting him. "No," she cried, as she saw him, "it can not go on like this!" and he noticed that her voice was full of tears.

"What is the matter, Anna, dear?" he asked.

"The matter is that I have been waiting for you, in torture, for two whole hours. But I must not quarrel with you. I am sure you had some good excuse. No, I won't scold you any more." She laid her hands upon his shoulders and looked into his face with her deep and tender eyes, as if she would have read his innermost thoughts. Then, after some moments, she led him to a seat. "You must have met *him*," she said. "It is your punishment for coming so late."

"How did it happen? Was he not to be at the Council?"

"He had been there, but returned for some reason which I am ignorant of. Never mind; we will speak no more of it. And so the prince has gone?"

"Yes, thank Heaven! You have no idea what a week it has been for me."

“Why so? Have you not been leading the life that all you young men are fond of? It is the neglected woman who is to be pitied, especially when, as in my case, she knows only what you choose to tell her of your doings. How can I be sure that even what you do tell me is true?”

“Anna! Do you not trust me? Have I ever concealed anything from you?”

“No, you are right,” she answered, trying to drown her jealous fears; “but if you only knew how I suffer! But I do trust you—I do trust you!”

Anna’s fits of jealousy were becoming more and more frequent; and such scenes as this, though proof of her great love for him, had a thrilling influence upon him. How often had he not only declared that his only happiness consisted in his love, and now, when he knew that he was loved, as only a man can be by a woman who has sacrificed everything for him, his happiness seemed more remote than when they had both left Moscow.

“This demon,” she went on, alluding to her own jealousy, “is sometimes too strong for me. You can not imagine what I have suffered while waiting for you. When you are with me I feel sure of you, but when you are away from me—” She stopped, as if wishing to let the subject drop. “You came face to face with *him*, you say? And I suppose he saluted like this”—she lengthened her face, half closed her eyes, and changed the whole expression of her features so completely that Wronsky could almost fancy he saw Karénine. He smiled, and Anna, too, commenced to laugh, the clear and ringing laughter which was one of her greatest charms.

“I can not understand him,” said Wronsky. “After your avowal in the country, I fully expected him to call me out. One can see that he is suffering.”

“He suffering!” she said, with an ironical smile. “He is very happy.”

“But why should we all torture ourselves when everything could be arranged?”

“That would not suit him. Oh, I know his nature well; he is made up of deceit. How else could he live with me, the wife who has been false to him, and speak to me as he does?” And she imitated his manner of saying “Now, my dear Anna—” “Had I been in his place, I would have torn the woman to pieces. He is not a man,

he is a ministerial machine. He does not understand that he is nothing to me. No, we will not talk about him!"

"You are unjust, dear," said Wronsky, trying to calm her; "but, as you say, we will not speak of him any more. About yourself now: what does the doctor say? You told me in your note that you were unwell. When will *that* take place?"

The mocking smile which had been on Anna's face gave way to an expression full of sadness.

"Soon," she said, "soon. You have said that our position is dreadful and that we must escape from it. What would I not give to be able to love you openly and freely! I should no longer weary you with my jealousy; but soon all will be changed, though not in the way we have thought of."

Her tears stopped her from saying more. She laid her white hand on Wronsky's arm.

"I don't understand you," he said—though he did, only too well.

"You asked me when *that* will take place. Soon—and I shall not live through it"—she spoke hurriedly—"I know it. I am positive of it. I shall die, and be very glad to die and to relieve you both of myself."

The tears were running down her cheeks. Wronsky kissed her hands, and sought, in calming her, to hide his own emotion.

"It will be better so," she said, pressing his hands convulsively.

"What foolishness!" exclaimed Wronsky, raising his head and recovering his self-possession. "How absurd!"

"No, it is true."

"What is true?"

"That I shall die. I know it—I have seen it in a dream; but let us talk of something else," she said, rising. "I will ring for tea, and we will have a pleasant chat, for your time is growing short."

She stopped suddenly as she gained her feet, and all at once a wonderfully sweet and serious expression came into her face. Wronsky saw it, yet could know nothing of the cause of this sudden transfiguration. In herself she had just felt the first movement of the new life she was soon to give birth to.

CHAPTER II.

AFTER meeting Wronsky at the door of his own house, Karénine, as he had planned to do, betook himself to the Italian opera. He heard two acts, spoke to those of his acquaintances who greeted him, and then returned home.

Instead of at once retiring, as was his rule, he passed up and down his room until the small hours of the morning. His anger would have prevented him from sleeping, for he could not pardon his wife for having broken the only condition he had imposed upon her—that she should not receive her lover in her own house. As she had seen fit to do so, he would punish her, would put his threat into execution, apply for a divorce and take away her son from her. It would be no easy matter, but he would keep his word. When he was in bed he could not sleep, and his state of mind was still more exasperated when at last he rose, hurriedly dressed himself, and proceeded to his wife's apartments.

Anna, who at least believed that she was familiar with his every mood, was startled when she saw him enter the room, his face sternly set, his lips compressed, and a fixed look of sadness in his eyes. He had never outwardly shown so much decision. He made no greeting, but walked straight to her writing-desk and opened it.

"What do you want?" she cried.

"Your lover's letters."

"They are not there," she said, and made an effort to close the desk; but he roughly pushed her hand aside and seized the portfolio in which Anna kept her more important papers.

"Sit down; I wish to speak to you," he said, pressing the portfolio tightly underneath his arm.

She looked at him in fear and astonishment.

"Did I not forbid you to receive your lover in this house?"

"I wanted to see him to—" She paused; the explanation was not an easy one to make.

"I do not wish to go into details, nor to know why a woman has need of seeing her lover."

"I merely wanted—" she began, emboldened by her

husband's plain words; but again she hesitated. "Can you not see how easy it is for you to wound and hurt me?"

"One can only wound an honest man or an honest woman. To call a person a thief who *is* a thief is merely stating a fact."

"You are showing a cruelty of which even I did not think you capable."

"Indeed? So you consider a husband, who allows his wife her full liberty so long as she maintains a respect for decency, cruel?"

"It is worse than cruelty, it is cowardice!" exclaimed Anna, rising to leave the room.

"No," he cried in a harsh voice, forcing her to her seat and holding her arm, "I have not finished. You speak of cowardice. Should not that word be applied to her who abandons her son and husband for a lover, yet still eats that husband's bread?"

Anna lowered her head. The justice of his words crushed her. She answered quietly: "You can not judge my behavior more severely than I do myself. But why speak of it now?"

"Why?" he exclaimed, his anger increasing. "Simply to let you know that since you can not respect my wish, I am about to take the necessary steps to put an end to this condition of affairs."

"Soon very soon, it will put an end to itself," said Anna, her eyes filling with tears at the thought of the death which seemed to her so near and so desirable.

"Sooner than you and your lover imagine. Ah, yes; you look for satisfaction in sensual passion—"

"Alexis Alexandrovitch!" she cried. "It is ungenerous, unmanly to strike one who is already on the ground."

"Ah! you think only of yourself. The sufferings of the man who has been your husband do not concern you in the least. What matter if his whole life be ruined, his—"

But the words refused to come, so great was his agitation.

For the first time, though it was but for an instant, Anna understood her husband's sufferings and pitied him. But what could she say or do but lower her head in silence. He also was silent for a space, and then commenced in a severe tone:

"I came to tell you—"

"I can not change," she murmured, interrupting him.

—“I came to tell you,” he went on, “that I am going to Moscow, and that I shall not enter this house again. You will learn everything which I have determined upon from the lawyer to whom I shall intrust the proceedings for divorce. My son,” he added, suddenly remembering what he wished to say concerning the boy, “will go to some of my own relations.”

“You are simply taking him away to make me suffer,” she stammered, raising her eyes to him. “You do not care for him—leave him with me!”

“It is true that the repulsion with which you have inspired me reacts upon my son; but, nevertheless, I shall look after him. Adieu.”

He would have left the room, but she held him back.

“Alexis, leave me Serge,” she said again; “it is all I ask of you. Leave him to me for my own deliverance—”

Karénine’s face flushed; he shook off the arm which held him, and left the room without answering a word.

CHAPTER III.

THE reception-room of the noted lawyer to whose office Karénine at once betook himself, was crowded with clients waiting their turn for admittance to the inner private office.

He handed his card to a clerk who, without looking it, informed Karénine that his employer was engaged, and was likely to be for some time.

“Have the goodness to take my card to him,” said Karénine, with dignity.

Within a few moments, the door of the private office opened and the lawyer himself appeared.

“Will you come in?” he said, holding the door for Karénine to pass through. He showed him to a seat, and then himself sat down at his desk and turned his chair so as to face his visitor.

“Before commencing to explain my business,” said Karénine, “I must impress upon you the necessity for allowing it to remain a secret between us.”

An almost imperceptible smile passed the lawyer’s lips.

“If I were not capable of preserving secrecy,” he said, “I should not occupy my position as a lawyer.”



Karénine glanced into the other's intelligent gray eyes, and jumped to the conclusion that he already knew all.

"You know my name?" he asked.

"I know the services you have done for Russia," said the man of law, with a slight bow.

Karénine sighed. It was difficult for him to speak; but when once he had commenced, his voice was clear and steady, and, at the proper time, emphatic.

"I have the misfortune," he began, "to be a husband who has been wronged. I wish to sever, by a legal divorce, the ties between myself and my wife, and, more especially, to separate my son from his mother."

The lawyer strove to throw a serious look into his gray eyes; but Karénine could see that they were full of satisfaction at the thought of such a *cause célèbre* of professional interest and enthusiasm.

"You wish assistance in procuring a divorce?"

"Precisely; but I must warn you that I have laid down certain conditions to myself, and should abandon the idea of a divorce if they can not be complied with."

"I understand you perfectly," said the other, lowering his eyes that Karénine might not read his satisfaction.

"I am fairly well acquainted with the general laws of divorce," continued Karénine, "but wish to learn the different forms most commonly practiced."

"In a word, you wish to know the different ways of obtaining a legal divorce," said the lawyer; and receiving an affirmative sign from his client, he went on: "A divorce, according to our laws, is possible, as you doubtless are aware, under these three conditions: a physical defect or incapacity of one of the two parties; desertion and abandonment by one or other for the space of five years; and"—pronouncing the word in a satisfied tone—"adultery. There is the theoretical side of the question; but I think that, in honoring me with your consultation, you have wished to learn about the practical side. As I am sure that neither of the first two conditions which I have named exist—"

Karénine made a slight movement with his head.

"—There remains," went on the lawyer, "the act of adultery by one of the two; and unless he or she is willing to acknowledge the guilt, proof the most positive is necessary."

The lawyer paused, as if to allow his client time to choose between the two alternatives. After a moment, as Karénine said nothing, he continued:

"In my opinion, the simplest and most reasonable course is the acknowledgment of adultery by mutual consent. I should not speak so openly to every one; but, if I am not mistaken, we understand each other."

Karénine was so troubled that the last words of the lawyer barely reached his ears. His astonishment was so patent that the other came to his rescue.

"I am, of course, supposing that the married parties find it impossible to live with one another. If both consent to a divorce, the details and formalities are of slight importance. It is the simplest and surest method."

This time Karénine clearly understood; but his religious feelings were opposed to such a measure.

"In the present case this method is out of the question," he said. "Can such proof as correspondence establish adultery, even if indirectly? I have some in my possession."

The lawyer closed his lips with a little expression of pity and disdain.

"Proofs," he said, "require witnesses. If you do me the honor to intrust this affair to me, I must be allowed to choose my own measures."

Karénine, his face very pale, rose from his seat.

"I will write to you when I have made my decision," he said, leaning with one hand on the table before him; "and since I can conclude, from what you say, that a divorce is possible, I shall be obliged if you will let me know your terms."

"Everything is possible provided you allow me entire freedom of action," replied the lawyer, evading the last question. "When may I count on hearing from you?"

"Within eight days. You can then inform me whether you will undertake the case, and on what terms."

"Certainly," said the lawyer, and conducted him to the door with great respect.

That same day Karénine made application in the highest quarters for permission to go abroad, ostensibly with the object of studying for himself some questions which had reference to certain foreign governments. Having obtained the necessary leave, he left St. Petersburg, and,



KARENINE

aving to pass through Moscow, determined to remain here for a few days.

CHAPTER IV.

THE morning after his arrival at Moscow, as Karénine was leaving his hotel for the purpose of calling upon the governor-general, he heard some one call him from a passing carriage. It was Stépane Arcadieitch, accompanied by Dolly and two of her children. Stépane was dressed in the very height of fashion, as handsome, gay, and cheerful as ever.

Karénine had no wish to meet any of his Moscow friends, least of all the brother of his wife. He would have bowed and passed on, but Oblowsky jumped from the carriage and rushed up to him with the usual effusive greeting.

"When did you arrive? Why did you not let us know you were coming? I saw your name last night among the list of arrivals at Dusseaux's, and was going to look you up."

"My time here is very short, and I am also very busy," said Karénine, dryly.

"Come and speak to my wife. She is anxious to see you."

They passed to Oblowsky's carriage.

"What has happened, Alexis Alexandrovitch, that you should avoid us?" asked Dolly, smiling. "How is dear Anna?"

Karénine murmured some words in an indistinct tone, and after a few moments' conversation would have excused himself, but Stépane stopped him.

"Do you know what you have to do?" he said. "You must come and dine with us to-morrow. Kosnichef and Pestzof will be there, so that you will hear the pith of our Moscow news."

"Do come," said Dolly. "We will dine at any hour that suits you—five or six, just as you please."

Karénine again answered in a voice which hardly reached their ears, and, raising his hat, walked quietly away to his own carriage.

"What a curious fellow!" said Stépane, following him with his eyes.

Some weeks previous to this, the Prince and Princess

Cherbatzky had returned to Moscow from abroad, bringing their daughter Kitty with them, almost completely restored to health.

There was no outward sign of the grief and subsequent sickness which she had gone through, save that she seemed to have lost much of her former girlishness and childish spirits, and to have changed from an ignorant and innocent girl into a woman who now knew the world and something of its sufferings and trials. Time and her own thoughts had served to convince her that Wronsky's sudden desertion—which, at the time, seemed utterly unbearable—had doubtless been for the best, so far as she herself was concerned; and now, though even yet it was painful to look back to what had happened, she was able to enjoy life as of old, and to constitute herself the light and happiness of her father's household. Perhaps her saddest moments were those in which she thought of Constantin Levine and her abrupt dismissal of him. She had heard but little and seen nothing of him through all the months which had intervened since that winter's day on which he stood before her in her mother's drawing-room and accepted his rejection with much dignity and bravery, aggravated, as it was, by the presence of the man whom he was justified in regarding his successful "rival."

As for Levine, he, too, during these months, had altered much. Time had dulled the pain of his disappointment, and though thoughts of Kitty were constantly in his mind, he was able to take his own share in the duties and interests of life. Most of the time he had spent at his own country home; but he had also made one or two journeys to distant parts of the country and had benefited by the complete change of surroundings which such travel brought with it. He had steadfastly refused the many invitations his friend Stépane had sent him to visit them in Moscow. Of what use was it, he thought, to revive the old sorrow and run the risk of again reopening the wound his pride and love had sustained by again seeing and meeting Kitty? Had he known how often her thoughts were of him, and the regret with which she looked back upon her share in his past, he might have conquered his sensitiveness and again appeared upon the scene of his defeat; but Levine was essentially a proud man—that he had been once refused was sufficient for him.

In his eyes such a refusal was definite, sad and regrettable though it might be; and so, burying the past to the best of his ability in the duties and cares of his life as a land-owner and proprietor, he had given himself up to the improvement of his estates and in the condition of those who were his tenants, and, in his eyes, dependent on him. Within the past few weeks he had made a short trip abroad, and, being obliged to pass through Moscow on his return, had determined to break his journey by a few days' sojourn in the city before returning to his own estates. He had arrived on the same day as Karénine, and was also making Dusseaux's his head-quarters.

It need hardly be said that Levine's first visitor was Stépane Arcadieitch.

The greeting between these two friends, of such different natures, was very warm.

"Take off your cloak and sit down," said Levine.

"I have not a moment to spare. I merely dropped in for a second," answered Stépane, who, nevertheless, proceeded to loosen his cloak, then, after a short time, to remove it altogether, and finally to remain for a whole hour chatting with Levine on sport and other matters.

"Tell me what you have done while you were abroad; where have you been?" he asked.

"I have been in Germany, in France, and in England, but simply visiting the manufacturing centers, not the capitals and larger cities. I was very much interested, too."

"Yes, yes; I know how interested you are in all labor questions."

"Not so much, perhaps, where our own country is concerned as in the relations between land-owners and their peasantry;" and he commenced a somewhat lengthy dissertation on his own views and those of his opponents.

"Don't go yet," he said as Stépane rose from his seat; "I am probably leaving to-morrow, and have seen nothing of you as yet."

"Ah! that reminds me of the most important thing I had to say," exclaimed Stépane. "We expect you to dine with us to-morrow, and will take no refusal. My brother-in-law, Karénine, and one or two others will be there."

"Is he here?" asked Levine, more anxious, however, for news of Kitty.

He knew that she had been visiting at St. Petersburg recently, but had no idea whether she had yet returned. Stépane did not enlighten him.

"Whether she is likely to be present or not," thought Levine, "I will accept."

"May we count upon you?" asked Stépane.

"Certainly. I will come with pleasure."

"Good! At five o'clock, then, and without any ceremony."

And Stépane rushed off to his next appointment—a luncheon—with a new chief of his department who was passing through Moscow on a tour of inspection.

CHAPTER V.

THAT same afternoon Stépane Oblowsky called upon Karénine at his hotel. He was anxious to obtain a decided acceptance or refusal of his invitation to dinner which Karénine's answer at their first meeting had somewhat left in doubt.

During the morning, Karénine had been occupied with official business, including the reception of a deputation from local bodies. The earlier part of the afternoon he devoted to his own affairs, chief among which was the promised letter to his lawyer.

He wrote, giving the lawyer full powers to proceed, and inclosing three letters from Wronsky to Anna, and one from her to her lover—these he had found in her portfolio. As he was closing the letter, he heard Stépane's voice asking to be announced.

"So much the worse," thought Karénine, "or perhaps, I should say, so much the better. I will tell him what I have just done, and he will then understand that I can not dine with him."

"I am glad to see you again," said Stépane, heartily as he entered the room. "I hope—"

"It will be impossible for me to come to you," interrupted Karénine, dryly, and receiving his brother-in-law standing.

Considering his determination as regarded a divorce, he thought it only right to be formal and distant toward the

brother of his wife. He forgot Stépane's irrepressible good nature and suavity.

"Why so?" the latter asked. "You can not mean it. You promised us, and we are counting upon you."

"It is impossible. The relations between our two families are about to be broken."

"How—and why?" asked Oblowsky, smiling.

"Because I am applying for a divorce from my wife—your sister. I should have—"

He did not complete the sentence. Contrary to what he had expected, his brother-in-law, with a startled exclamation, sunk into a chair.

"Alexis Alexandrovitch, it is impossible!" he cried in a voice of grief.

"It is, nevertheless, true."

"Pardon me. I can not believe it!"

Karénine himself sat down. He felt that his words had not produced the effect he had desired, and that the most categorical explanation would not change his brother-in-law's relations toward himself.

"It is a cruel necessity; but I am forced to apply for the divorce," he said.

"What am I to say? Knowing you to be an upright man, and Anna as an exceptionable woman—excuse me, but nothing could change my opinion of her—I can not believe this. There is some grievous mistake."

"Ah! if it were only a mistake!"

"Permit me—but I understand. One thing I beg of you, do not act in haste."

"I have done nothing hastily," replied Karénine, coldly. "In a case like this, one can not ask the advice of others. I am decided."

"It is frightful!" said Stépane, with what was almost a groan. "I implore you if, as I suppose, matters have not yet gone too far, to do nothing until you have talked with my wife. She loves Anna as a sister; yes, loves her, and she is a woman of great common sense. If only out of friendship for me, first talk with her."

Karénine was silent and reflected. Stépane respected his silence and watched him with sympathy.

"Why not come and dine with us?" he said at last. "This once, at least. My wife expects you. Come! I ask you again, come and speak with her."

"If you wish it so strongly, I will come," said Karénine, with a sigh; and then, making a great effort, he changed the conversation and brought it to bear upon Stépane's own affairs, his new chief, and other matters which he knew were of interest to the younger man.

Stépane looked at his watch.

"Heavens!" he cried, "it is past four, and I have another call to make. It is settled, then? You come to dinner? You would grieve both my wife and myself very much by refusing."

"As I have promised, I will come," answered Karénine in a melancholy tone, conducting his brother-in-law to the door.

"Thanks. I trust you will not regret it;" and taking his cloak from the servant, Stépane hurried from the hotel.

CHAPTER VI.

AT five o'clock the Oblowskys' guests had assembled. In addition to Kosnichef and Pestzof there were the old Prince Cherbatzky, Karénine, Kitty, and her young cousin. Levine was the last to come, and Stépane met him in the hall.

"Am I late?" he asked. "You have a number of guests, I see. Who are they?" he added, nervously.

"No one but family friends. Kitty is here," said Stépane. "Come; I want to introduce you to Karénine."

Now that he knew he was about to meet Kitty for the first time since that fatal evening, Levine's courage left him.

"Present me to Karénine, I beg," he said; and entered the salon with a beating heart and the courage of despair.

She saw him at once, and so great was her joy that while he was greeting her sister Dolly, the tears welled to her eyes. Levine and Dolly both noticed it. Blushing and growing pale in turn, she was so distressed that her lips trembled. Levine approached her; she held out to him a cold little hand with a smile which might have passed for calm had it not been for the tearful brilliancy of her eyes.

"It is a long time since we have seen you," she forced herself to say, and for a few moments they talked of commonplaces.

Stépane came up to Levine to lead him to where Karénine was standing, and the introduction took place. When they entered the dining-room, Stépane, as if by accident, seated all his guests with the exception of Levine and Kitty. Then, as if suddenly recollecting their existence, he placed them side by side in the only remaining seats. Throughout the dinner, though they spoke but little to each other, their happiness was complete. Each felt drawn toward the other by some mysterious tie, and as if just entering upon a new world inhabited only by themselves.

When the ladies had left the dining-room, Stépane passed round the cigars, and the usual after-dinner talk among the men commenced; but Karénine, who did not smoke, soon excused himself and passed to the salon. Dolly, who was evidently waiting for him, sat alone in a quiet corner of the room.

"How glad I am that you came!" she said. "I want so much to talk to you. Let us sit here."

Karénine, with an air of polite indifference, sat down by her.

"I am glad myself," he said, "to have the opportunity of seeing you, for I leave here to-morrow."

Dolly, who, in herself, was convinced of Anna's innocence, grew pale with agitation as she saw the calm indifference of this man who was about to put away his wife from him.

"Alexis Alexandrovitch," she said, summoning all her strength and courage, "I asked you for news of Anna and you have told me nothing. How is she?"

"I think that she is well, Daria Alexandrovna," he answered, without looking at her.

"Forgive me if I seem to go beyond my rights in what I say; but I love Anna as if she were my own sister. Tell me, I beg of you, what has passed between you and of what you accuse her?"

Karénine frowned and looked straight before him.

"Your husband has doubtless told you of the reasons which cause me to bring about this rupture with Anna Arcadieyna."

"I do not believe it, and I never will believe it!" exclaimed Dolly, pressing her hands tightly together. At that moment the rest of the men entered the room. She

rose quickly from her seat, and laying her hand upon Karenine's arm, said: "Will you come with me where we shall not be disturbed?"

Karénine, who was commencing to share her emotion, obeyed, and followed Dolly into a little room used by her children as their school-room. It was quite empty, and they sat down before the plain little table at which the infantile brains were wont to puzzle over their daily tasks.

"I repeat, I believe nothing of it!" said Dolly, striving to meet his eyes.

"Can *facts* be contradicted?" he asked, laying emphasis upon the word.

"But what fault has she committed? Of what do you accuse her?"

"She has failed in her duties and betrayed her husband—that is what she has done."

"No, no; it is impossible! No; thank God, you are deceiving yourself!" cried Dolly, pressing her two hands to her forehead.

Karénine smiled bitterly. He felt anxious to prove to her, and to himself also, that his conviction was correct. This warm championship of his wife brought back all the pain of his wound, and although doubt was no longer possible to him, he answered, less coldly:

"It is impossible to be mistaken when a wife herself comes and declares to her husband that eight years of married life and a son are to count for nothing; that she wishes to commence a new life."

"Anna and sin! How can one associate the two? How can one believe—"

"Daria Alexandrovna," he exclaimed, angrily, "I would give anything to be able still to doubt. The doubt itself was cruel, the present certainty is still more cruel. When I merely had doubts, I could still hope. Now I have no hope and many more doubts. I am even prejudiced against my son. I ask myself if he is mine. I am a most unhappy man?"

Dolly, though she could not see his face, knew that what he said was true, and her pity for him was great.

"My God! it is terrible! But you are firmly decided upon a divorce?"

"I have taken this last step because there is none other left to me. The most grievous part of such a misfortune

is that the burden can not be carried as in other misfortunes," he added, reading Dolly's own thoughts. "One can not remain humiliated."

"I understand—perfectly," replied Dolly, lowering her head. She was silent. Her own domestic griefs came back to her memory; but suddenly she clasped her hands together with a gesture of supplication, and raising her eyes courageously to Karénine's, she said: "But stay! You are a Christian. Think of what she will become if you abandon her."

"I have thought of it—thought deeply over it. When, with her own lips, she told me of her dishonor, I gave her the chance to re-establish herself—I sought to save her. And what has she done? She has utterly disregarded all sense of decency and respectability. One can rescue a fellow-being from death who is unwilling to die; but with a nature so corrupt as to find happiness in its own degradation, what is to be done?" The memory of his last interview with his wife came back to him, and his manner again became cold and stern. "I am deeply grateful to you for your sympathy," he said, rising from his seat. "Now I am forced to leave you."

"One moment! You should not lose her—listen to my own experience. I also am married, and my husband deceived me. In my jealousy and indignation, I, too, wished to leave him; but I paused and reflected. And who was it that saved me? Anna. And now we are united again, my husband saw the wrong he had done me and I forgave him. You also must forgive."

Though Karénine listened to her words, they had no effect upon him, for the same anger was still burning in his heart which had decided him upon divorce. He made answer in a harsh, firm voice:

"I can not—and I do not wish to forgive. It would be an unjust act. I have done everything for this woman, and she has willfully dragged me through the mire. I do not think I am a bad-hearted man, and I am not given to hatred; but her I hate with all the strength of my soul, and I will not forgive her. The wrong she has done me is too great."

His voice was fairly trembling with anger.

"Love those who hate you," murmured Dolly, half in shame.

Karénine smiled. He knew the text, but it did **not** apply to his own position.

"You can love those who hate you, but not those whom you yourself hate. Forgive me for having troubled you," he said. "Each of us has his own sorrow;" and recovering command over himself, he quietly bade Dolly good-night and took his departure.

CHAPTER VII.

LEVINE had difficulty in restraining the temptation to follow Kitty to the salon when she left the dinner-table, but he was fearful of displeasing her by any too pronounced attention. He remained with the other men, joining in the general conversation, but his thoughts were with Kitty in the adjoining room.

At last the cigars were finished and a move made to the salon. Even as he entered the room, Levine felt that Kitty's eyes were singling him out from among the other men, and he saw that a glad smile was upon her face.

"I was in hopes of finding you at the piano," he said, "ready to delight us with some music. It is what a poor country bachelor like myself misses most of all."

"No," she answered, "I was waiting and wondering how long you would stay in the dining-room, occupied with stupid discussions. What pleasure can men find in arguing? It never convinces any one."

"Verr, very true," he said; and seated himself at the small table where she sat.

Kitty had taken up a pencil and was idly scribbling on a piece of paper. It helped her, in a measure, to conceal the nervousness she felt, for now that Levine had come to her, her heart was beating furiously. They were both silent for some time. Levine was watching her face and thinking to himself how impossible it would now be for him to live without her.

"See what a lot of paper I have wasted with my scribbling," she said at last, and rose as if to move away.

"Stay, one moment!" exclaimed Levine, an idea suddenly entering his head. "There is something I have long wanted to ask you."

There was a little troubled look in her eyes as she sat down again. "What is it," she said in a low tone.

"I will do so in this way," Levine replied, taking the pencil which she had been using, and writing on a piece of paper. "Here is my question," he said, handing her the sheet on which he had written these letters: *w. y. s. t. i. w. i. d. y. m. t. o. f. a.*: they were the first letters of the words, "When you said that it was impossible, did you mean *then* or for *always*?"

Levine had little hope that she would be able to decipher his mysterious screed, yet he watched her as she glanced at it as if his whole life depended on the result.

Kitty bent over the paper and studied it with knit brows, then, as if its meaning suddenly dawned upon her, she raised her eyes to Levine's. "I understand," she said, blushing.

"What word does that stand for?" he asked, pointing to the *i.* of the word "impossible."

"For *impossible*," she answered; "but the word was not the right one."

She took the pencil from his hand, and, in her turn, wrote: "*a. t. t. i. c. m. n. o. a.*"

Dolly, from her seat across the room, could see her sister with the pencil in her fingers, a timid and yet happy smile upon her lips, her eyes shining with a bright light as she raised them to Levine's face. It softened the sorrow her conversation with Karénine had left in her heart. She saw Levine radiant with joy—he had understood Kitty's answer: "*At that time I could make no other answer.*"

He looked questioningly into her eyes.

"You meant *then* only?"

"Yes," answered the girl, with a smile.

"And now?" he asked.

"You shall read what I will own to you is my one great wish," and she wrote the first letters of the words, "That you have been able to forgive and forget."

With trembling fingers, he traced his own reply:

"I have never for a moment ceased to love you!"

Kitty looked at him, and her lips trembled.

"I understand," she murmured.

"Are you playing at being Levine's secretary?" said Prince Cherbatzky, approaching the two young people. "If you are coming to the theater with me, my dear, it is time for us to go."

Levine rose and escorted Kitty to the door. All doubts

were now at rest. Kitty had acknowledged that she loved him, and had given him permission to speak to her parents the next day.

CHAPTER VIII.

WHEN Kitty had gone, the one attraction of the evening, so far as he was concerned, seemed to Levine to have disappeared. He felt a strong desire to be alone and able to give himself entirely to his own thoughts, and, before long, he succeeded in making his excuses and at the same time his escape from his friend's house.

He counted the hours which must elapse before he could with any sense of propriety present himself at the Cherbatzky mansion. Sleep, he felt, was out of the question, his nerves were too highly strung, nor was he willing to allow Kitty's sweet face to disappear from his thoughts even during the few hours of necessary sleep. In spite of the coldness of the night air, he sat by the open window of his room at the hotel and gave himself up to his own reflections. Hour after hour passed away, but it was still quite early in the morning when, having refreshed himself with a plunge into cold water, he changed his dress and sallied forth into the streets, toward the house which sheltered *her*. Though he had neither slept nor broken his fast, he still felt buoyant and excited. After walking about the streets for several hours he returned to his hotel, by this time sufficiently calm to sit down and patiently await midday. When noon came he called an *isvostchik* from those in front of the hotel and set out to learn his fate.

When he reached the entrance to the Cherbatzky palace, the huge Swiss on duty at the door recognized him with what seemed to Levine a knowing smile.

"It is a long time since you were here, Constantin Dmitrich!"

Far from the familiarity annoying him, Levine felt a glow of satisfaction at the good fellow's greeting. The latter insisted on removing the visitor's hat and cloak with his own hands, and ushered him into the large hall.

"To whom shall I announce monsieur?" asked a footman; and it seemed to Levine that he, too, knew everything.

"To the prince and princess," he answered.

The first member of the household that he met was the French governess, Mademoiselle Linon. The good old lady's eyes fairly shone through her gold-rimmed spectacles as she greeted the young man with genuine warmth; but before they had interchanged many words, the rustle of a dress was heard near the door and the sound of a light footstep. The governess disappeared—how or where Levine had no eyes to notice. Kitty had entered the room, and coming up to him with rapid steps, her eyes brimming over with happiness, she laid her hands upon his shoulders. In another moment he was holding her in his arms. She, too, had spent a sleepless yet happy night, and had counted the minutes throughout the morning to the time that she might expect him.

Few words passed between them. Their joy kept them silent.

"Come and find my mother," she said at last, taking his hand.

He lifted hers to his lips and kissed it.

"Can this be true?" he asked in a broken voice. "I can hardly believe that you love me."

She smiled at his doubt and hesitation.

"Yes, it is true," she said, gently, "and I am very happy."

Still holding his hand, she led him into the large salon where her mother sat. The princess, as she saw them enter, rose from her seat, half weeping and half laughing. Then, with sudden energy, she advanced toward Levine and embraced him.

"So it is all settled?" she said through her tears. "I am very, very glad. You must love her very dearly. Kitty, dear, I am very happy."

"You have certainly lost no time," said the prince, who had just entered the room. He strove to appear calm, but Levine could see that his eyes, too, were full of tears. "I have always wished it," he went on; "and when this little goose was foolish enough to think—"

"Papa!" cried Kitty, closing his mouth with her little hand.

"Very well," the prince said, "I will say no more, only that I, too, am very— Heavens, what an old fool I am!"

and taking his daughter in his arms, he kissed her tenderly.

After some minutes the emotion which each of the four experienced had sufficiently calmed down to allow of a more practical discussion of the future. It was a welcome means of relieving their feelings, for each of them, during the first moments, had experienced a strange impression as if he or she had, during the past, been in some way to blame.

The princess was the first to speak.

"And when shall it be? We must announce the marriage and arrange the betrothal. What do you say, Alexander?" to her husband.

"There is the one who has most right to decide," answered the prince, designating Levine.

"When?" said the latter, blushing. "To-morrow, if my wishes are consulted—the betrothal to-day, the marriage to-morrow."

"Come, come, my dear boy, that is absurd!"

"Well, then, let us say—in eight days."

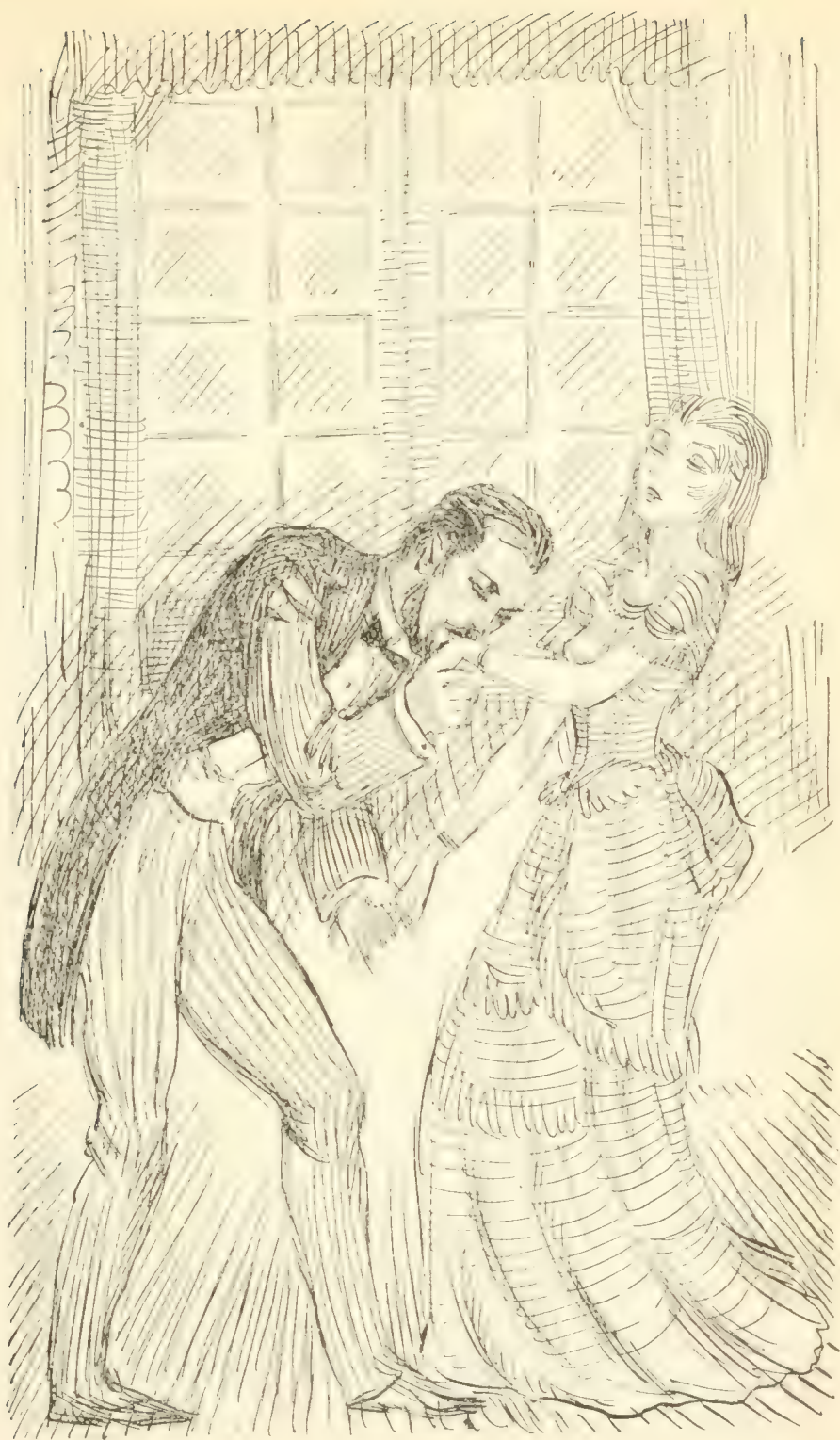
"That, too, is out of the question," said the princess, smiling at the lover's impatience. "Think of the *trousseau*."

"Must there be a *trousseau*, and all that sort of thing?" said Levine to himself in affright. "Well, after all, neither the *trousseau*, nor the betrothal, nor anything, in fact, can spoil my happiness." He glanced at Kitty and thought that he could read in her face an approval of her mother's words. "Well, I suppose my ignorance is to blame," he said, aloud. "I merely spoke from my own wishes."

"We will think it over," said the princess, "before deciding. In the meantime, we can announce the engagement."

She approached her husband's chair, and, bending over, kissed him in silence. He rose from his chair, passed his arm around her waist, and the father and mother left the room together.

When the door had closed upon them, Levine, who by this time had recovered his self-possession, sat down by Kitty and held her hand in his. His heart was full of many things he wished to say, but he had difficulty in finding the proper words.



"I see now," he said, "that in my innermost mind I have always known that this would be, though I could never bring myself to cherish an actual hope."

"And I also knew," said Kitty, "that even when I threw away my own happiness, it was you that I loved. I was carried away by some foolish impulse. Now, what I have to ask you is this: Can you forget the past?"

"Perhaps," said Levine, "it has been all for the best. I, too, ought to ask for your forgiveness."

Their conversation was interrupted by the entrance of Mademoiselle Linon, who came to congratulate her favorite pupil, a tender smile upon her kind and honest face. She was followed by the older and more privileged of the family servants, each anxious to say a few kindly words to their young mistress and her lover.

So quickly had the news traveled that, before long, a big stream of relations and friends passed into the Cherbatzky palace, full of congratulations and good wishes. Among them was the Countess Nordstone. She had always protested that her friend should look higher for a husband, but there was something in Kitty's face which told her that the girl's choice was fixed and irrevocable, and from that time Kitty and her future husband had no more enthusiastic supporter than the Countess Nordstone.

CHAPTER IX.

WHEN he found himself once more alone, and in his own room, Karénine recalled, one by one, the events and conversations of the evening. By Dolly's words he had been especially affected. He smiled within himself at the idea of her applying biblical precepts to his case. It seemed to him an inconsistency truly feminine.

He ordered tea to be served, and then, taking a railway guide, commenced to map out his tour of inspection.

At this moment a servant brought him two telegrams. Karénine laid down the guide and opened them. The first announced the appointment of a political rival to an office which he himself had hoped to fill. He reddened with anger, and, throwing the dispatch to the ground, paced up and down the room. "Those whom the gods wish to destroy, they first make mad!" he quoted to himself, applying the words to those who had supported his rival's

nomination. His eyes fell upon the second message. "Some more news of a similar kind," he thought as he opened it. The one word "Anna" danced before his eyes. It was from his wife! "I am dying. I implore you to come to me. I shall die more easy if I have your forgiveness," it ran.

He read the words with a contemptuous smile and cast the paper from him. "Some new trick," was his first thought; "she is capable of any deceit. She should be on the point of her confinement; but what can be her aim? To render their child legitimate? to compromise me? to stop the divorce? The message says, 'I am dying.' " He read it once again, and this time its real meaning seemed to strike him. "If it is true, if suffering and the approach of death have brought her to repentance, and if, for fear of her deceiving me I should refuse to go to her, it would be not only cruel but wicked, and I could never forgive myself."

"Pierre," he called to his servant, "order a carriage. I am going to St. Petersburg."

He decided that he would see his wife. He would leave her at once if he found that her illness was feigned or exaggerated; if not, or if he arrived too late, he would at least follow out her last wishes.

The next morning Karénine arrived in St. Petersburg, tired with the night's travel. Do what he would, he could not drive from his brain the idea that this death, if it did occur, would cut short all his present difficulties. When he reached his house, he saw that a carriage and an *isvostchik* were drawn up before the door, their drivers both asleep on their boxes. As he mounted the steps, a momentary indecision came over him, but he nerved himself. "If she has deceived me," he thought, "I will keep quite calm and go away again. If she has spoken the truth, I will do all that propriety demands."

The door was opened by a footman in plain clothes whose appearance betokened that he had been up all night.

"How is your mistress?"

"Madame was safely confined last night," the man answered.

Karénine stopped short, and felt that every drop of blood had left his face. He realized now how much he had desired this death.

“And her health?”

“Madame is very weak. There has been a consultation. The doctor is here now,” was the answer.

“Take my things,” said Karénine, shortly, slightly relieved that all danger was not over.

He entered the ante-chamber. A military cloak was hanging there. Karénine noticed it and asked:

“Who is here?”

“The doctor, the nurse, and Count Wronsky.”

Karénine passed through the rooms. The salon was empty. The nurse came out from his wife’s boudoir, and with the familiarity which the approach of death brings with it, took him by the hand and led him toward the bedroom.

“Thank God you have come!” she said. “She speaks of nothing but you—always of you!”

“Bring some ice at once,” came from the bedroom in the doctor’s imperative voice.

Seated on a low chair in the boudoir, his face covered with his hands, through whose fingers the tears forced their way, was Alexis Wronsky. At the doctor’s words he uncovered his face and saw that Karénine was before him. He sunk back in the chair and again concealed his features, as if in complete despair; then, with an effort, he raised himself, and said:

“She is dying. The doctors say that there is no hope. You are the master here. But grant me permission to remain. I will conform to your slightest wish.”

As he saw Wronsky weep, Karénine felt the compassion which always seized him at the sight of the suffering of others. He turned away without making a reply, and walked to the bedroom door.

Anna’s voice could be heard speaking rapidly in distinct and lively tones. Karénine passed in and approached her bed. Her face was turned toward him, the cheeks flushed, the eyes shining with feverish brilliancy, her small white hands nervously clutched and played with the coverlid of her bed. At the first glance she seemed herself, and in the highest spirits. The words came clearly and perfectly accentuated from her lips:

“Alexis—I mean Alexis Alexandrovitch—is it not strange and cruel that they should *both* be called Alexis—Alexis would not refuse me, he would have forgiven me—

why has he not come? He is a good man, he does *not* know himself how good he is. My God! my God! how I suffer! Give me some water, quickly! But I suppose it is not good for *her*—for my little daughter! Give her to a nurse, then—I will consent. Perhaps it will be better. When he comes, he would not like to see her. Take her away.”

“He has come—he is here,” said the nurse, trying to attract Anna’s attention to Karénine.

“What nonsense!” continued Anna, still not seeing him.

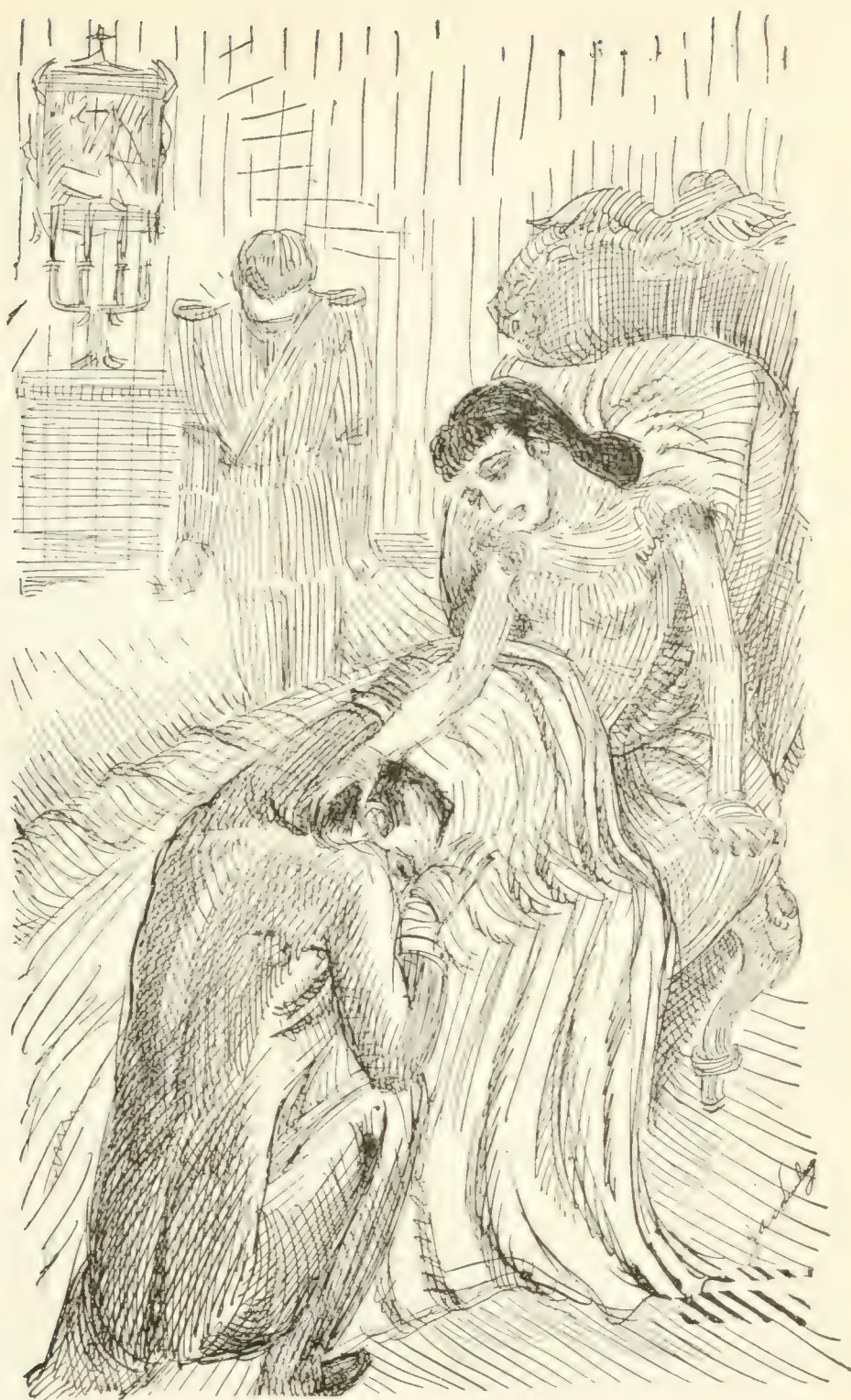
“Give me the little one; give her to me. He has not arrived yet. You say he will not forgive me because you don’t understand him. Nobody does—except myself. His eyes—Serge has got his eyes; that is why I can not bear to see him any more. Has Serge had his dinner yet? I am sure they are neglecting him. *He* would never forget him. Put Serge’s little bed in the corner of the room, and Marietta must sleep near him.”

Suddenly she paused. A look of fear came into her face, and she raised her arms above her head as if to ward off a blow—she had recognized her husband.

“No, no,” she said, quickly; “I am not afraid of him, I am only afraid of death. Alexis, come near to me. I must be quick, for time is short, and I have only a few minutes to live. The fever will come back again and I shall not be able to understand anything. Now I do understand, I understand everything and see everything.”

Karénine’s face was full of suffering. He tried to speak, but his lips trembled and he could not control his voice. He took her hand between his own, and each time that he turned his eyes to hers he saw that they were fixed upon him with a sweet and humble expression he had never seen before.

“Wait—you do not know—” She paused, seeking to collect her ideas. “Oh, yes, yes; this is what I wanted to say. Don’t be astonished. I myself am always the same, but there is another being in me of whom I am afraid. It is she who loved him, while I myself could not forget what I used to be. Now I am altogether myself, not the other one. I am dying—I know it—ask the doctor. There are terrible weights upon my feet, my hands, and my very fingers: but it will soon be over. *There is*



only one thing I must have—your forgiveness—you must forgive me entirely. I have sinned and am to blame; but I have heard—was there not some holy martyr who was even worse than I have been—I forget her name. No, you can not forgive me. I know it is impossible. Go, go; you are too perfect!”

She held him with one burning hand and pushed him from her with the other.

Karénine's emotion now overpowered him. He had never acknowledged that the Christian law, by which he guided his life, commanded him to pardon and love his enemies, and yet now his heart was filled with love and forgiveness! He knelt down by the bedside, and hiding his face in the coverlids, sobbed like a child. Anna leaned toward him, put one hot, feverish arm around his head, and raising her eyes, said, almost defiantly:

“There, I knew it well! Good-bye, now, good-bye to every one—see, they have come back again! Why don't they go away? Take these furs away!”

The doctor gently lowered her to the pillow and covered her arms. She made no resistance, but looked straight before her with burning eyes.

“Remember that I only asked for your forgiveness—nothing more. Why does *he* not come?” she asked, quickly glancing at the door. “Come! Come here! Give him your hand.”

Wronsky came to the bedside and still hid his face between his hands.

“Uncover your face,” she said, “and look at him. He is a saint. Uncover your face, I say! Alexis”—to her husband—“make him draw his hands away. I want to see his face.”

Karénine took Wronsky's hands and gently drew them from before the face distorted with suffering and humiliation.

“Give him your hand,” said Anna. “Forgive him.”

Karénine, his own tears falling, held out his hand.

“Thank God! Thank God!” she said, “now all is right. I will stretch my limbs a little—it gives me ease. There, that is good. How ugly those flowers are”—pointing to the pattern of the hangings—“they are not like violets at all. Oh, my God! When will this be over? Give me some morphine, doctor—some morphine! Oh,

God!" and she threw herself about the bed in a convulsion of pain.

The doctors were fearful of the worst. For the whole day she remained unconscious and delirious. Toward midnight her pulse almost ceased to beat, and they looked for the end each moment.

Wronsky went to his own home, but came early in the morning to hear the news and sat in the little ante-chamber.

Karénine led him to his wife's boudoir. "Remain here," he said; "perhaps she may ask for you."

So another day passed, and on the third the doctors commenced to have some hope—her vitality was so strong. On that morning, Karénine entered the boudoir where Wronsky was, and, closing the door, sat down and faced him.

"Alexis Alexandrovitch," said Wronsky, feeling that an explanation was at hand, "I am incapable of speaking or of understanding. Have pity on me! However great your own suffering, believe me, mine is still more terrible."

He would have risen, but Karénine detained him.

"You must listen to me," he said; "it is necessary. I must explain to you the nature of the feelings by which I am guided, and by which I shall still be guided, so that you may fall into no error through me. You are aware that I had decided upon obtaining a divorce, and had taken the first steps toward it. I will not hide from you that at first I hesitated, possessed as I was with a desire for revenge. When I received her message, this desire still existed—I will go even further, and say that I wished for her death"—he paused for a moment, anxious to express his meaning clearly—"but I have seen her again. I have forgiven her, and without any restriction. The satisfaction of being able to forgive has seemed to show me my duty still more clearly. Now, I only ask of God this one thing—to let me still have the joy of forgiving." The tears filled his eyes. Wronsky was struck by his calm and steadfast look. "That is how I am situated," he continued. "It is in your power to drag me through the mud and make me the laughing stock of the whole world; but I shall not abandon Anna on that account, nor shall I reproach her. I can see clearly and precisely what my duty is. It is to remain with her, and

I shall remain. If you wish to see her, you shall be informed of her condition; but I think that, for the present at least, it would be better for you to withdraw."

Karénine rose, his voice stifled with sobs.

Wronsky rose also, and stood with downcast face and bent body. It was not in his nature to understand sentiments of this kind, and yet he felt that he was in the presence of one whose ideas were of a standard far beyond the conception of such a one as himself.

CHAPTER X.

WHEN Wronsky left the house after this interview, he stood upon the steps, asking himself where he was and whither he was going; he felt humiliated and confused, as if he had just lost the path along which he had been walking proudly and contentedly. The rules according to which he had hitherto lived, seemed false and full of deception. The betrayed husband, whom he had so far looked upon as an obstacle in his way, had raised himself to a height which compelled respect, and now appeared honest, high-minded, and generous, while he himself was a mean and spiritless creature.

What caused him the most acute unhappiness was the thought of losing Anna forever. His passion, which had momentarily cooled, now awoke, more violent than ever. He was to lose her at the moment when he had learned to know and love her to a degree beyond what he had thought possible. He recalled with horror the time when Karénine had forced him to uncover his face.

When he reached his room, he threw himself upon a sofa, utterly worn out with the past three nights of sleeplessness; the strange events of the past few days came back to his mind one by one.

"If I could but go to sleep and forget!" he sighed; and, indeed, in a few moments, felt that sleep was coming over him. Suddenly he found himself upon his knees, beside the sofa, and wide awake. These words were ringing in his ears: "It is in your power to drag me through the mud," the words which Karénine had used; and then he saw Anna's face, flushed with fever, her eyes looking tenderly, not upon *him*, but upon her husband, and he pictured his own foolish and absurd appearance.

"To sleep—and forget!" he kept repeating, throwing himself again upon the sofa and closing his eyes. "I can not. It is impossible!" he groaned. "How can I blot out this memory? I can not exist like this!" But still there sounded in his ears the words of Anna: "Uncover his face!" "What is happening? Am I going mad?" he asked himself. "Mad? Why, madmen find refuge in suicide! No, no; I must go to sleep!" Of a sudden he sat up, trembling all over. "All is over now; there is nothing left for me to do;" and then, in his imagination, he saw his life as it might have been had Anna not entered into it. His old ambitions—his military life, the friends and comrades who had passed by him in their career, the good opinion of the imperial circle—all were gone; there was nothing left.

He jumped to his feet, unloosened his coat and collar so that he might breathe more easily, and commenced to pace up and down the room. "This is how one goes mad," he thought; "how one first thinks of suicide—to escape from shame!"

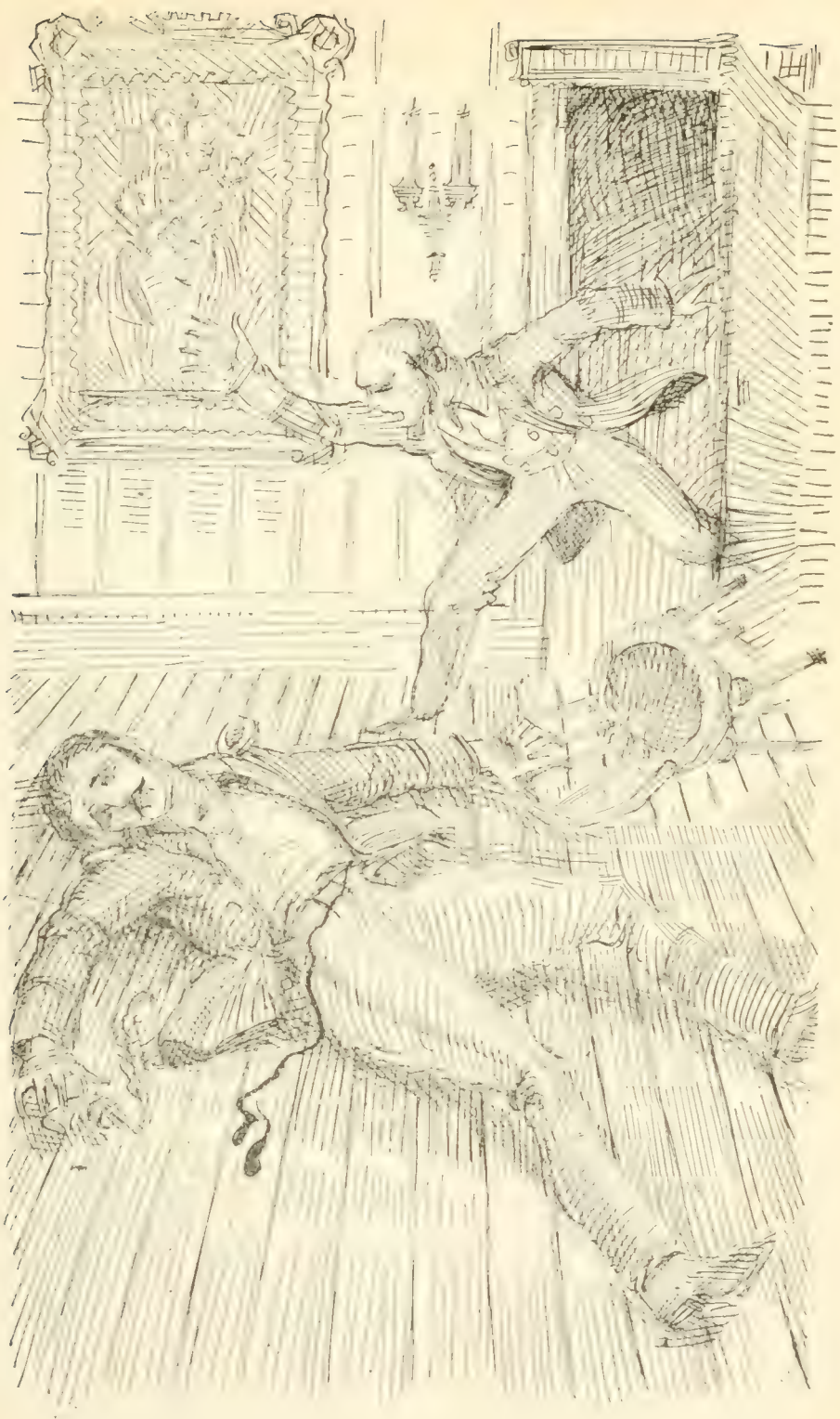
He walked to the door and closed it securely; then with fixed look and compressed lips he approached the table, took up a revolver, raised the trigger, and reflected. For two whole minutes he remained motionless, the weapon in his hand, his head bent down, his mind turning upon the same train of thought—his lost happiness, his ruined future, and his present shame.

Then he pressed the revolver against his left side, and fired. He felt a violent shock, and fell, without hearing the report. The pistol fell from his grasp, the room and all its furniture seemed to go round and round, and he felt that he was losing consciousness. The hurrying steps of his servant aroused him. With an effort he understood that he was lying stretched upon the ground, his hands and the tiger-skin on which he lay bespattered with blood.

"What a fool I am! I have missed!" he murmured, raising himself upon one arm and groping for the pistol. His head commenced to swim round again, and once more he fell, bathed in his own blood.

His valet entered the room, saw the figure of his master stretched before him, and, frightened, rushed away to summon help.

In an hour's time he lay in his bed, three surgeons at



examining his wound, and his sister-in law, Maria, watching over him as nurse.

CHAPTER XI.

WHEN Karénine had granted his forgiveness to his wife, whom at the time he supposed to be close on death, he had not thought how matters might turn out in the event of her recovery. By her bedside, for the first time in his life, he had allowed his pity to go out freely and without constraint toward another who was suffering; heretofore he had looked upon this as a weakness, and had resolutely fought against it. Remorse at having wished for her death, the pity with which she inspired him, and, most of all, the happiness he found in the ability to forgive, had changed his grief into a profound peace, his sufferings into joy.

He had forgiven his wife and he pitied her. Since being a witness to Wronsky's despair, he pitied him also. Toward his son, whom he blamed himself for having neglected, he was now all kindness, while as for the little baby-girl, what was at first pity soon developed into tenderness when he saw the weak and helpless little creature almost neglected during the mother's illness; he busied himself in caring for her, and soon became devotedly attached to her.

But it was soon apparent that his new relations with his wife lacked naturalness and stability. When the weakness caused by the nearness of death had passed away, Karénine noticed that Anna seemed afraid of him, uneasy in his presence, and unable to look him in the face.

It was as if she, too, were conscious of the instability of their present position toward each other, and simply waiting for some move or further explanation on his part.

One day, toward the end of February, when Karénine returned home from the ministry, he noticed a strange footman standing in the hall, holding a thick cloak of fur.

"Who is here?" he asked.

"The Princess Elizabeth Tverskoï," answered the lackey.

Betsy's presence in his house was far from agreeable to Karénine; she was connected, in his mind, with too many unhappy memories. He went straight to the apartments devoted to the children.

Serge was sitting with the English governess, busily employed upon his lessons. His father greeted him with some affectionate words, patting him on the head as he spoke to him. He was anxious to see his wife, but did not wish to meet the Princess Betsy. However, he knew that Anna would be astonished if he did not go to her at once, and so, putting his own inclinations aside, he walked toward the door of her room. It was partially open, and as he approached, the noise of his footsteps drowned by the thick carpet, he heard Betsy say:

"If he were not going away, I could understand your refusing to see him, and your husband's objection."

"It is not a question of my husband, but of myself alone. Please say no more about it," was Anna's answer in moved tones.

"Surely you must have some wish to see him—the man who has almost died for you—"

"It is exactly on that account that I do not wish to see him."

Karénine stopped, feeling like a guilty man. He would have turned back had not the thought struck him that such a course would be unworthy of him. The voices were now silent, and he entered the room.

Anna, in a gray peignoir, her black hair cut quite short, was sitting in an invalid's chair. As usual, at the sight of her husband, all animation left her face; she bent her head and threw an uneasy glance toward Betsy. The latter, dressed, as usual, in the very height of fashion, greeted Karénine with an ironical smile.

"Ah!" she said, with an air of astonishment, "I am charmed to meet you in your own house. You never show yourself elsewhere nowadays; and, indeed, I have not seen you since Anna was taken ill. I have heard of all your troubles from other people, though. You are certainly a model of a husband."

Karénine greeted her coldly though politely, and, taking his wife's hand, questioned her about her health.

"I seemed to be rather better," she said, avoiding his look.

"Still, I think you are feverish," he said.

"We have been talking too much," interrupted Betsy. "It is dreadfully selfish on my part, and I must run away."

She rose; but Anna, into whose face the blood had rushed, held her by the arm and detained her.

"No, please, don't go just yet," she exclaimed. Then, turning to her husband: "I may as well tell you now, for I wish to hide nothing from you. Betsy tells me that Count Wronsky wishes to come and say good-bye before his departure for Tashkend." She spoke quickly, still without raising her eyes to his face. "I have told her," she added, "that I can not receive him."

"What you said, dear, was that it depended upon Alexis Alexandrovitch," corrected Betsy.

"No, I can not receive him; it would be—" Anna paused, questioning her husband with a look; but he had turned away his head. "In a word, I do not wish to."

Karénine advanced and took her hand. She would have withdrawn it, but mastered herself and let him take it in his own.

"I thank you for your confidence," he began; then, looking at the princess, he stopped. In her presence it was impossible for him to express any generous sentiment.

"Well, good-bye, dear," said Betsy; and kissing Anna, she left the room escorted by Karénine.

When they reached the boudoir, Betsy stopped short, and, pressing Karénine's hand significantly, said:

"Alexis Alexandrovitch, I know you to be a truly generous man, and my esteem and liking for you are so great that I venture on one word of advice, though it is, perhaps, no business of mine. It is this: Alexis Wronsky is the soul of honor, and he is just setting out for Tashkend."

"I am much obliged to you both for your sympathy and your advice, princess. All I have to say is, that if my wife is able or wishes to receive any one she will decide for herself."

He spoke gravely and with dignity, though the ironical smile with which Betsy received his words showed him how unable she was to appreciate it.

CHAPTER XII.

HAVING taken leave of the Princess Betsy, Karénine returned to his wife's room. She rose in her chair, at his

entrance, with a startled look, and he could see that she had been crying.

"I am much obliged to you for your confidence," he said again in a quiet tone; "and I agree with you that, when once he has gone away, there is no necessity for you to receive Count Wronsky."

"What is the use of mentioning it again?" asked Anna, peevishly, "after I have already said so myself;" but her thought was: "No necessity for a man who has tried to kill himself to bid good-bye to the woman he loves, and who, for her part, can not live without him!" "Let us say no more about it," she added, more calmly.

"I left you at full liberty to decide for yourself," he recommenced. "The Princess Tverskoï certainly interferes in family matters of a painful nature, and which—"

"I know nothing about that," interrupted Anna. "I only know that she is sincerely fond of me."

Karénine sighed and said no more on the subject.

Anna played nervously with her handkerchief, and looked at him from time to time with the dislike which she could not suppress. Her only wish was to be relieved of his presence.

"I am going to see the doctor," said Karénine at last.

"What for? I am doing well."

"On the baby's account. She is fretting very much, I hear, and I have no great confidence in the wet nurse."

"Why did you not let me nourish her myself when I begged you all to? I could at least have tried. In spite of everything"—Karénine well understood the meaning of her words, "in spite of everything"—"she is a child, and should not be allowed to die." She rang the bell and ordered that the baby should be brought to her. "When I wished to nourish her you would not let me, and now you reproach me for not having done so."

"I reproach you for nothing—"

"Yes, you do. My God! why did I not die! But," she added, struggling to control herself, "forgive me; I am nervous and talking unjustly. Leave me, please!"

Karénine left the room. "This can not last," he thought as he closed the door.

He had never yet been so forcibly impressed with the impossibility of keeping up such a state of affairs in the eyes of the world, nor had his wife's dislike been made so plain

to him. It seemed to him that the world and his wife demanded of him something which he could not even understand, but which was reawakening the feeling of hatred in his heart and nullifying the victory he had lately gained over himself. His one thought was of a course of action which would save Anna from a degrading and shameful future; but he felt the unevenness of the struggle and his own powerlessness, and dreaded lest he eventually be forced to do the evil thing which the world seemed to expect of him.

CHAPTER XIII.

STEPANE OBLOWSKY had arrived in St. Petersburg with two missions—to see for himself his sister's condition, and assist as far as possible in arranging her troubles, and also to express his thanks in the proper quarter for his appointment as chamberlain—an honor which had recently been conferred upon him.

His first visit to Anna was made soon after her husband had left her, after their last interview, and she was still in tears. In spite of his natural buoyancy and cheerful spirits, Stépane was shocked to see the change in his sister, and the marked sadness of her face.

"Everything is going badly," she said in answer to his affectionate inquiries. "Day and night, the past and the future—everything is wrong."

"You see things too darkly," he replied. "You must take courage and look life in the face. It is hard, I know; but—"

"I have heard of certain women," interrupted Anna, "who love those whom they are deceiving. For myself, I hate him because of his very generosity and goodness. I can not live with him! Understand me; it is some physical weakness over which I have no control; but I can not live with him any longer. What am I to do? I thought that I had been as unhappy as it was possible to be; but this passes all that I had ever imagined. Though I know him to be a good man, perfect, and recognize my own inferiority, I, nevertheless, hate him!"

"You are still weak and nervous," her brother said, "and inclined to exaggerate everything. Things are not so very terrible." And in the face of such despair, Stépane

Arcadieitch was able to smile with such a kindly and good-hearted expression that Anna felt somewhat comforted.

"No, Stiva," she said; "I am a lost woman—a lost woman! I am worse, in fact, for I can not yet say that all is over. I feel, alas! the very contrary. The cord is tightly stretched and must soon break. But the end has not yet come. When it does, it will be terrible!"

"No, no; the cord can very easily be slackened. There is no situation without some exit."

"I have thought and thought, and can see only one."

He knew, without further words, that she meant—death.

"Now, listen to me," he said. "You can not judge of your own position as I can. Let me give you my advice, frankly and freely. I will take things from the commencement. You married a man twenty years older than yourself, and you married without love, or at least without then knowing what love was. It was a mistake, I grant—"

"A terrible mistake!" said Anna.

"But, I repeat, it is done—an accomplished fact. You then had the unhappiness to fall in love with another than your husband—that also was unfortunate, but equally a fact. Your husband discovered it and pardoned it." He paused between each sentence to allow her to make an answer, but she remained silent. "Now, the question resolves itself into this: Can you continue to live with your husband? Do you wish it? Does he wish it?"

"I know nothing—nothing at all."

"You have just told me that you can not endure him."

"No, I have not said so. I deny it; I know nothing, and can understand nothing."

"But let me—"

"You can not understand. I am hanging head foremost over a precipice, and *ought* not try and save myself. *I can not do so.*"

"Well, *we* will save you from falling and hurting your self. I understand you. I can see that you are unwilling to express your real feelings and desires."

"I desire nothing, nothing, except that this should all be over."

"Do you suppose he does not perceive that? Do you think he, too, is not suffering? And what can result from

all this self-torture? Divorce, on the other hand, would solve everything."

It had not been easy for Stepane to lead up to the desired climax. He watched Anna closely to see its effect upon herself.

She shook her head without replying, but her face was lighted up for an instant with a look which clearly told how entrancing such a prospect was to her.

"I shall be so glad to do all I can to arrange it," said Stépane, smiling with confidence. "Now, say no more. I will do my best. I will go and see him." Anna looked at him with brilliant and pensive eyes, but still made no reply.

CHAPTER XIV.

STEPANE ARCADIEVITCH entered his brother-in-law's office with what, for him, was an unusually solemn face.

Karénine, his hands behind his back, was walking up and down the room, his thoughts, indeed, occupied by the same subject as his visitor's.

"I am not disturbing you, I hope," said Stépane, troubled at the expression of the other's face. "I want to talk with you on a very important matter."

Karénine bent his head and waited for him to continue.

"I wish to speak to you," Stépane went on, "about my sister, and about the position in which you are both, at present, placed."

A sad smile came upon Karénine's face. He made no direct reply to Stépane's words, but taking from his desk a letter which he had commenced to write, held it toward him.

"It is my thought every moment," he said. "Here is what I have tried to say to her, thinking that possibly I might express myself better in writing, as my presence seems only to irritate her."

Stépane, somewhat bewildered, took the paper and read:

"I am well aware how my presence oppresses you, painful though it may be to me to know it. I acknowledge it and feel that it could not well be otherwise. I do not reproach you at all. God is my witness that during your illness I resolved to forget the past and commence a new

life. I do not regret, and shall never regret, what I did then—it was your recovery, the recovery of your soul, that I desired. I have been unsuccessful. Tell me yourself what will bring you rest and happiness, and I promise, in advance, to abide by the sense of justice which I am sure will guide you.”

Stépane handed the letter back without a word. Karénine's lips were trembling convulsively.

“What does she herself wish? That is what I want to know.”

“I am afraid she hardly knows,” answered Stépane. “She is unable to judge for herself. She has been crushed, literally crushed, by your generosity and forbearance. Should she read your letter she will not be able to answer it. It will only humiliate her still more.”

“Then what is to be done? How am I to know what she wishes?”

“If you will permit me to offer my advice, it is that you should clearly and concisely point out the measures you think needful to solve the situation.”

“But how?” said Karénine, passing his hand over his eyes. “I can see no possible solution.”

“Every difficulty has one,” said Oblowsky, rising, and coming to the point. “You spoke some time ago about divorce. If you are convinced that all chance of mutual happiness has gone—”

“There are different degrees of happiness. Supposing that I do consent to everything, no matter what, how are we to escape from this trouble?”

When Stépane answered, there was the same calm and soothing smile upon his face which had done much to comfort Anna, and now, in turn, it had a similar effect upon her husband.

“She will never say what it is that she wishes. Her secret longing, though, is to break the bonds which bind her to cruel memories. In my opinion, it is indispensable that your mutual relations should be made perfectly clear, and that can only be done by your both regaining your liberty.”

“By divorce?” interrupted Karénine in a tone of disgust.

“Yes, divorce, in my opinion,” repeated Stépane.

blushing. "From every point of view it is the most sensible course for two married people who find themselves in your position. When living together has become intolerable, what is to be done?"

Karénine gave a deep sigh and covered his eyes with his hand.

"There is only one point to be considered," continued Oblowsky, "and that is whether one of the two wishes to marry again. If not, it is very simple."

Overcome with emotion, Karénine murmured some unintelligible words. What seemed so simple to Stépane, he had turned over in his thoughts a thousand times, and so far from finding it simple, he deemed it impossible. His own dignity, his respect for religion, would be violated, and, what was still worse, the woman whom he had loved and had once pardoned, would be condemned to dishonor. What would become of their son? He could not possibly be left with his mother; what sort of bringing up could he receive? But, above all, was the one idea that, by consenting to a divorce, he would be dooming Anna to destruction. Once divorced, she would unite herself to Wronsky by ties that would be both illicit and illegal—for marriage, according to Church law, could be dissolved by death alone.

He would not admit the truth of a single one of Stépane's arguments; he could refute them a hundred times over; and yet, as he listened to them, he knew that they were simply the manifestation of the irresistible force which governed his life and to which he would end by submitting.

"It only remains for us to know the conditions under which you will consent to a divorce," said Stépane, "for she will never dare to ask anything of you, and will leave herself entirely in your hands."

"My God! my God! Why should all this come upon me?" thought Karénine, burying his face in his hands.

"I can understand your being moved like this," said Oblowsky; "but if you reflect—"

"If one smites you on the left cheek, offer him the right; if he robs you of your cloak, give him your coat also," said Karénine, bitterly, to himself.

"Yes, yes," he exclaimed, aloud, "I will take all the shame upon myself—I will even give up my son. Do

what you wish!" and turning from his brother-in-law, he seated himself by the window and said no more.

"Alexis Alexandrovitch, you may be sure she will appreciate your generosity. Without a doubt it is the will of God;" and then, feeling that he had said something foolish, Stépane broke off and smiled.

Karénine would have answered; but the tears still hindered him.

CHAPTER XV.

THOUGH the bullet had not reached his heart—the spot at which he had aimed—Wronsky's wound was a dangerous one, and for days he hung between life and death.

When the crisis was safely passed and he could converse, he called his sister-in-law, Maria, who had nursed him tenderly, to his bedside.

"Maria," he said, very seriously, "I shot myself accidentally—tell everybody so; it would seem so ridiculous; they must not think or say that I did it purposely."

"None has said so," she answered; and then with a smile she added: "I hope, though, that you will leave off shooting yourself accidentally."

"Perhaps it would have been better," began Wronsky, and then he stopped. Now that he was out of danger, he felt as if he had been freed from much of his unhappiness—as if, in fact, his shame and humiliation had been washed away. Henceforth he would be able to think calmly of Karénine and recognize his grandeur of soul without himself feeling abased. He could take up his life once more and again look people in the face. One thing, however, he could not tear from his heart—regret at the loss of Anna, even though he had determined to come no more between the repentant wife and her husband.

His recovery was speedy, and one of his first acts was to accept the offer of a mission to Tashkend.

As the moment of his departure drew near, the sacrifice he was about to make to duty seemed more and more cruel, and the pain was increased by the refusal of Anna to see him before he left.

When, however, his cousin Betsy hastened to his apartments, and informed him that Stépane Oblowsky had ob-

tained Karénine's consent to a divorce, he felt that nothing hindered him now from seeing Anna.

He hurried to the house, rushed upstairs without waiting to be announced, and entering Anna's room, took her in his arms and covered her face and neck with kisses. Anna had expected that he would come to her, and had thought deeply over what she would say to him; but now that he was here she had no time to speak—his passion carried her away. She would have tried to calm him and herself, too, but it was impossible. Her lips trembled, and for a time she could not speak.

"Yes, you have conquered me," she said at last. "I am altogether yours," and she pressed his hand to her bosom.

"So it should be, and always shall be, as long as we live," he said. "We will forget everything in our happiness. If anything were needed to increase our love, the terrible past would suffice;" and taking her hand in one of his, with the other he caressed her pale face and her hair, whose locks had been shorn so short.

"I can hardly recognize you with your hair cut short," he said. "You make a splendid boy. But how pale you are!"

"Yes, I am still very weak," she answered, her lips again trembling.

"We will go to Italy and build your health up again."

"Is it possible," she said, looking into his eyes, "that we shall be alone together, like husband and wife?"

"I am only surprised that we have not been so hitherto."

"Stiva tells me that *he* consents to everything," said Anna; "but I will not accept his generosity. I no longer wish for a divorce, but only for some decision as regards Serge."

How, in this, the first moment of their reunion, she could think of her son and of divorce at the same time, was beyond Wronsky's comprehension.

"Don't speak of that; don't even think about it," he said, turning her hand over and over in his own, as if to withdraw her attention to himself; but she looked beyond him and appeared as if she did not hear his words.

"Ah! why did I not die—it would have been far better!" and the tears filled her eyes.

At one time Wronsky would have deemed it impossible to withdraw from the dangerous but much-coveted mission to Tashkend. Now, without hesitation or delay, he refused it; and, seeing that his refusal would be received with displeasure in the highest quarters, he also handed in his resignation.

A month later Karénine was alone, with his son, in his own house, and Anna went abroad with Wronsky, having refused the proffered divorce.

PART FOURTH.

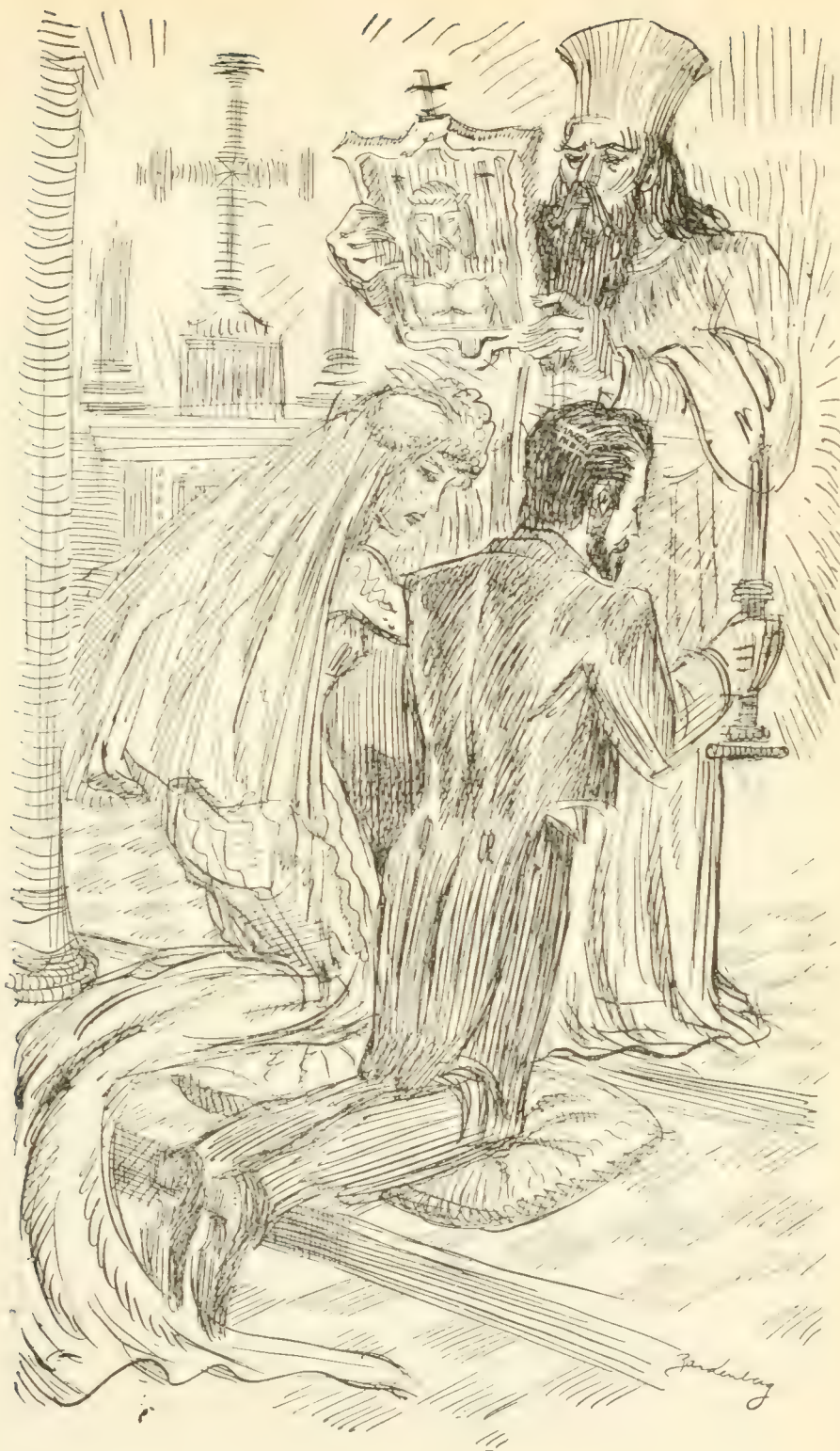
CHAPTER I.

WITHIN six weeks of the announcement of their betrothal, the marriage of Constantin Levine and the Princess Kitty Cherbatzky took place.

The whole fashionable world of Moscow was present at the ceremony, which was celebrated with all the religious pomp and outward observance that the ritual of the Church allowed.

For many days prior to the wedding Levine had been in a state of nervousness and agitation common to men of his peculiar nature. For himself, he would have preferred a quieter and less ostentatious celebration of the service, but this by no means met the views of the Prince and Princess Cherbatzky, who saw no reason why the affair should not be held on a scale commensurate with the social position of both parties. Nor was Kitty herself unwilling to have her one great day of triumph in the eyes of all the world, and in like manner to the sisters who had preceded her in their entrance into married life. The greater part of the service, with all its forms and peculiar ceremonies, seemed to Levine like a dream. Only here and there did the words of the archdeacon and assisting priests reach his ears.

"I unite thee, Constantin, servant of God, to Catherine, servant of God," and then, as he passed the large ring upon Kitty's slender finger, the same formula was repeated by the priest to her.



The tears came to his eyes; a lump seemed to rise in his throat. All his former ideas of marriage and married life were mixed up in his brain in dire confusion. And Kitty, too, could scarce hear or comprehend the utterance of the many prayers and exhortations. As the ceremony progressed, her heart was filled with a triumphant joy which prevented her from fixing her attention upon what was going on.

At one period, when the priest instructed them both to advance and stand upon a small piece of carpet in front of him, all those around them were curious to see whose foot should be the first to press the carpet, and so, according to the old superstition, determine whether he or she were in future life to be the real master or mistress.

But in spite of the audible remarks made by those about them, neither Kitty nor Levine recalled the familiar tradition.

Then, as if in disjointed sentences, they heard the priest's voice as he prayed to the Almighty, "that husband and wife may have the gift of wisdom and be blessed with numerous progeny," and then the words, "for the woman must leave her father and her mother and become as one with her husband," and the supplication, "bless them even as Thou didst bless Isaac and Rebecca, Moses and Sephora, and let them behold their children unto the third and fourth generation!"

When the priest held out the marriage crowns, and Prince Cherbatzky, with trembling hand, placed the one which was destined for the bride on Kitty's head, Levine turned his eyes to her and saw the joyous smile upon her face as, with her own fingers, she assisted her father. He was struck with her look of intense happiness, and from that moment, himself felt reassured and inexpressibly content.

They listened patiently to the priest's final words of advice and exhortation; they drank together the wine and water which he blessed for them, and followed him as he bid them walk around the pulpit with one of their hands in each of his.

At last came the time when the priest, with a smile, exclaimed: "And now embrace your wife; and you"—turning to Kitty—"your husband."

Levine left the church, his young wife upon his arm,

with a new and strange sensation within him. He felt that now, and for the first time, they had come together and were one.

The same evening the newly married pair left Moscow for their country home.

CHAPTER II.

WRONSKY and Anna had now been traveling together for three months. They had visited in turn Venice, Rome, and Naples, and had arrived at a small Italian town where they had planned to stay for some time.

Wronsky, who, immediately on their arrival, had entered into negotiations with the agent for the tenancy of a villa in the neighborhood, was informed by the proprietor of the hotel that a Russian gentleman had called upon him in his absence, and would return later. While Wronsky was speculating as to who the visitor might be, the latter entered the hotel. It was his former friend and fellow-student, Golinitchef. Though, during the past few years, they had seen little of each other, their greeting was warm and cordial.

There can be little doubt that Wronsky's pleasure at the meeting was largely caused by the feeling of loneliness and *ennui* he had lately suffered from.

"I am more than glad to see you," he said, with a smile.

"I saw your name among the arrivals," said the other, "but could hardly believe that it was you. I am pleased to meet you."

"And what brings you here?" asked Wronsky.

"I have been here for more than a year. I am hard at work."

"Indeed?" said Wronsky, with interest. "Let us go inside. You know Madame Karénine, I think? We are traveling together, as I suppose you know;" and as he spoke he watched the other's face.

"No," answered Golinitchef, with what was perhaps an excusable falsehood, "I was not aware of it. And how long have you yourself been here?"

"For the past three days," said Wronsky, still watching his friend's face. "He is an intelligent and sensible

man," was his thought, "who can see things in their proper light. I can safely introduce him to Anna."

Since they had been together, every chance meeting of this kind caused Wronsky the same doubt and hesitation. As a rule, the men whom they had come across had seemed to understand the situation in what Wronsky called "the proper light," though, had he been asked, he would have found it difficult to exactly define his own meaning. The fact was that they did not wish to know or understand more than they could see, and simply behaved as men of the world accustomed to face such delicate situations.

The entrance of the two men into the room brought a quick blush to Anna's face, which the new-comer noticed and was pleased by. He had never met Anna, and was much struck by her beauty and the simplicity of her manner. He was charmed, too, with the openness with which she seemed to meet the situation, calling Wronsky by his first name and speaking without hesitation of their intention to establish themselves at the villa, which was dignified by the name of palace. Still, he had known Karenine, and could not quite understand how Anna, having deserted her husband and her son, and having lost her own good name, could be so gay and happy.

"Your 'palace' is mentioned in all the guide books," he said. "You will find a superb Tutorial there—a magnificent specimen of his latest style."

"I propose," said Wronsky, addressing Anna, "that we go and see it. The weather is splendid."

"Gladly," she replied. "I will go and put on my hat."

She could read in Wronsky's face that he was satisfied with her reception of his friend, and she answered him with a little quick and gracious smile.

When she had left the room, the two men felt some slight restraint: Golinitchef, as one who wished to express his admiration, yet did not venture to do so; Wronsky, as one who desired the compliment, yet had rather it were not expressed.

"So you have settled down here?" said Wronsky, forcing himself to open conversation. "Are you still devoted to the same studies?"

"Yes," answered Golinitchef, highly gratified by the

question. "I am writing the second part of 'The Two Origins,' or, rather, to be more exact, I am busy collecting and preparing the material. It will be a much larger work than the first part;" and he commenced a long dissertation on his literary offspring.

So intent was he upon his subject that he did not even notice Anna's re-entrance. Dressed in out-door costume, with her sunshade in her hand, she stood quietly near the two men; and to look upon her face and perfect figure was an immense relief to Wronsky, who was commencing to feel bored by his friend's careless flow of words.

It cost Golinitchef no little effort to break away from his one pet hobby; but Anna skillfully led the conversation into another channel, and in a lively discussion on painting and works of art, they finally arrived at the palace.

"One thing in particular pleases me in our new quarters," said Anna, as they entered the villa. "You will have a splendid studio."

"And do you paint?" asked Golinitchef, quickly, turning to Wronsky.

"I used at one time," said the latter, with a modest blush, "and am now returning to my old love."

"He has real talent!" cried Anna, joyously. "I am no judge myself, but have heard true critics and connoisseurs say so."

CHAPTER III.

THE early period of her moral freedom and return to health was, for Anna, one of unalloyed joy. The idea of the evil she had wrought did not in any way embitter her existence. Did she not owe to it a happiness great enough to blot out all remorse? The events which had followed her illness, from the time of her reconciliation with Karenine until her departure from under his roof, appeared to her as a nightmare, from which she had been freed by her travel with Wronsky. Why look back at it?

"After all," she said to herself, "though I have done this man a fatal and inevitable wrong, I will not profit by his misfortune. If I have caused him suffering, I also will suffer; I renounce all that I have loved and esteemed in the world—my son and my reputation. Since I have sinned, I deserve neither happiness nor the freedom



of divorce, and I accept the shame as well as the grief and separation."

Sincere as she may have thought herself, Anna had not really known either suffering nor shame. During their travels both she and Wronsky had avoided all meetings which might have placed them in a false position, and those persons whom they had met had understood, or pretended to understand, their position toward each other. As for the separation from her boy, it no longer caused her suffering. She was passionately attached to her little daughter, and thought but seldom of Serge.

The more she saw of Wronsky, the dearer he became to her. His presence was always new and enchanting to her. Every trait of his character seemed perfect to her, his words and ideas truly grand and noble. This excessive admiration frightened even herself, and she dared not avow it to him. By acknowledging her own inferiority, she might be opening a breach between them, and there could be no more terrible thought for her than the loss of his love. This fear, however, was in no way justified by Wronsky's own conduct. He never manifested the slightest regret at having sacrificed to his passion a career which promised to be most brilliant; he had never been more respectful in his treatment of her, more fearful lest her position cause her suffering. Her slightest wish was law to him, and he thought of nothing but of following out her smallest desires. Indeed, the finding herself the object of such unceasing care caused a sense of weariness to come over her at times.

As for Wronsky, in spite of the complete fulfillment of his desires, he was not entirely happy. The eternal mistake of those who expect to find satisfaction in the accomplishment of their wishes was his. He had found that he had gained but a portion of the expected happiness. At times, since his actions and his love had become free, his happiness did appear complete; but then, inevitably, a certain sadness would fall upon him. Without knowing it, he was continually seeking some new aim to his desires, and mistook passing caprices for serious aspirations. The life of constant travel, far away from his old life and associations in St. Petersburg, oppressed him; nor could he allow himself to think of finding such distraction as he had done when traveling in former days. On one occasion his

proposal to sup with some old friends whom he chanced to meet threw Anna into a state of veritable despair. As a starved animal rushes upon some food he has chanced to come across, so Wronsky unconsciously threw himself upon such distraction as painting, reading, and political study could afford. When quite a youth he had shown a decided taste for art, which he now revived as something with which to occupy and stimulate his mind. The French school of art had most charm for him, and, governing himself by its lines, he commenced to work upon a portrait of Anna. She was in Italian costume, and all those who saw the picture appeared as highly pleased with it as the artist himself.

CHAPTER IV.

At first the novelty of his life in the palace, with its old-fashioned furniture, rare works of art, and wealth of antiques and tapestries, was highly pleasing to Wronsky. He had formed the acquaintance of an Italian artist, under whose tuition he commenced to study from nature, and soon, even in his outward appearance and dress, he assumed the rôle of the amateur painter and artist.

"Do you know anything of this man—Mikhaïlof?" he asked, one morning, as Golinitchef entered the study. He held out to him a newspaper in which mention was made of a great picture just completed by an artist named Mikhaïlof, who was said to be living in poor circumstances in that very town.

"I do know him," answered Golinitchef as he read the article. "He possesses a certain amount of talent, but his conceptions are absolutely false. They are, without exception, conceptions of Christ or other religious characters, according to the ideas of Ivanof, Strauss, and Renan."

"What is the subject of this particular picture?"

"'Christ before Pilate.' He portrays Christ as a Jew of the newest and most realistic school;" and Golinitchef started upon one of his accustomed voluminous dissertations.

"Is it true that this Mikhaïlof is in want?" asked Wronsky, interrupting him. The thought flashed upon him that here might be an opportunity for him to appear

in the rôle of Mæcenas and patron of a true but needy artist. "We might get him to paint Anna Arcadieвна's portrait."

"Why mine?" she asked. "I have your portrait, and want no other. Let us, rather, have one painted of Anny"—for so she called her little girl.

"And you say you know him?" asked Wronsky again of Golinitchef.

"I have met him. He is an original character, without any education, a free-thinker, full of atheism, materialism, and the negation of everything—a regular savage, in fact. The son of a small hotel keeper in Moscow, he received little or no education. He entered the Academy with a certain amount of reputation—for he is no fool—and set himself up as an instructor of every one else."

"Why should we not call upon him and see him for ourselves?" suggested Anna. The two men acquiesced, and, an hour later, they drove up to the small house which was pointed out as Mikhaïlof's, and sent up their cards.

The artist was sitting before the easel hard at work when the visitors' cards were brought to him. The next moment they themselves were ushered in.

Anna and Wronsky, already disenchanted by Golinitchef's description of Mikhaïlof, had this feeling disagreeably emphasized by the appearance of himself and his surroundings. He was of short stature and insignificant bearing, and his shabby clothes and general appearance of vulgarity were too much for the air of importance and dignity which he strove to assume.

He strove to read at a glance the character and station in life of his visitors. Wronsky and Anna, he presumed, were Russian tourists of distinction, rich maybe, but ignorant on all questions of art. Golinitchef's face he remembered, but could not for the moment determine when or under what circumstances he had met him.

"They have, without a doubt," he said to himself, "been visiting all the old and famous galleries, and now, having run the gantlet of the German impostors and English pre-Raphaelites, they are honoring me with a visit, so as to authorize them in saying that they have completed the list."

He was well acquainted with the ways of *dilettantes*

visiting the studios of modern painters, and how prone they are to be convinced that modern art merely serves to prove the incontestable superiority of the older masters.

And yet, in spite of his conviction that these rich and high-born Russians could not be aught else than imbeciles and fools, he displayed his sketches and uncovered his one large canvas with a nervous and shaking hand.

"This," he said, disclosing the picture, "is 'Christ before Pilate'—the subject being taken from the twenty-seventh chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel."

His lips were trembling with emotion. He stood behind his visitors and viewed the picture critically, as if he were one of their party. In spite of himself, he was anxiously awaiting the verdict of these three people whom, a few moments ago, he had affected to despise.

The silence which they kept was unbearable to him, and, to conceal his anxiety, he addressed Golinitchef.

"I think I have had the honor of meeting you before," he said, his eyes still fixed upon the faces of Anna and Wronsky.

"Certainly. We met, if you remember, at Rossi's house, the evening when the young Italian actress—'the new Rachel,' as they style her—recited," answered Golinitchef, lightly; and then, seeing that Mikhaïlof was waiting for some word of praise, he added:

"You have made great progress with your picture since last I saw it; and now, as I was then, I am very much impressed with your figure of Pilate. It represents a man of good intentions but of weak mind, a man who has no conception of the importance of his own action. It seems to me, though—"

He was interrupted by a fit of coughing on Mikhaïlof's part, who took this means of concealing his inability to find words with which to reply to the other's criticism. Little as he would have acknowledged it, even those few words from his visitor filled him with joy. In one short moment he was lifted from self-abasement to enthusiasm.

Wronsky and Anna, meanwhile, were exchanging their opinions in low tones, fearful of expressing some criticism whose ignorance might offend the artist's ears. Mikhaïlof, however, thought that he could read a favorable verdict in their faces, and approached them.

"What an admirable expression the Christ has!" said

Anna, thinking that praise of the central figure could not fail to gratify the artist. "One feels that he is pitying Pilate," she added.

"And how beautifully painted!" said Golinitchef. "What an air of divinity surrounds the figure!" He was not unwilling to imply a disapproval of the realistic Christ the artist had had in view.

"Yes, it is a strong work," said Wronsky. "Those figures in the background stand out in wonderful relief. You can see the cunning of the skilled hand," he added, turning to Golinitchef.

But his remark annoyed Mikhaïlof, on whose face there came a frown of discontent. He could not understand the epithet of cunning, and had always been opposed to the application of praise for technical skill toward the intrinsic merit of a work.

"The only criticism I would dare to make—" began Golinitchef.

"Make it, pray," interrupted Mikhaïlof, smiling.

"It is," said the other, "that you have painted God in man's form and not a man fashioned in God's image. Of course I know that such was your intention."

"I can only depict Christ as I myself understand Him," said Mikhaïlof, gloomily.

Anna and Wronsky, fearing lest a bitter and tedious discussion might ensue, moved away from the easel and commenced to make a tour of the studio. They stopped in front of a small picture.

"What a gem! How charming!" they said with one voice.

Mikhaïlof wondered what had pleased them. He had completely forgotten the picture, which had been painted some three years before, and had only been lately brought forth at the request of some would-be purchaser.

"It is nothing—an old study," he said, carelessly.

"But a very excellent one," said Golinitchef, sincerely.

It was a simple sketch. Two children, beneath the shade of a leafy tree, fishing with rustic rod and line in the waters of a placid stream. The elder of the two seemed all intent on the sport; the younger, leaning on one elbow, and careless of his rod, gazed on the water with pensive eyes. Of what were his thoughts? was one's first impression.

Mikhaïlof would have led his visitor to another and more pretentious picture, but Wronsky unconsciously gave offense by asking if the study were for sale. The question of money seemed out of place and ill-timed to the sensitive artist. He answered, with a slight frown:

"It is offered for sale."

Before leaving the studio, Wronsky had bought the picture and had arranged with Mikhaïlof that he should paint Anna's portrait.

CHAPTER V.

MIKHAÏLOF came to the palace upon the day appointed, and commenced his picture of Anna. At the fifth sitting it had assumed a likeness of her which surprised Wronsky.

"I made innumerable efforts, one after another," he said, speaking of the portrait he himself had painted, "and with small success. He has only to look once at her to catch the likeness. There lies the difference between one who understands his art and one who does not."

"It will come to you with time and practice," said Golinitchef, consolingly, for in his eyes Wronsky had decided talent, and was bound, sooner or later, to make a name for himself as an artist.

Away from his own studio, Mikhaïlof appeared a different man. When visiting the palace he was respectful without humility, and careful to avoid all intimacy with people whom he at heart did not care for. He would always address Wronsky as "your excellency," and, in spite of Anna's frequent invitations, could not be induced to dine with them, or to appear at the palace save for the appointed sittings. Anna was more kind to him in her manner than the others were; Wronsky treated him with marked politeness, and constantly asked for his criticism on his own efforts; Golinitchef lost no opportunity of endeavoring to inculcate in him his own particular views on art. But Mikhaïlof remained as cold and repellent as ever. Even with Anna he refrained as much as possible from conversation; while, to Wronsky's questioning, he maintained an obstinate silence, and took no trouble to conceal the weariness which Golinitchef's discourses caused him.

The ill-concealed hostility soon produced a general feel-



ing of discomfort, and the feeling of relief was general when the sittings in due time came to an end, and the artist's visits to the palace ceased. His portrait, now that it was finished, was an admirable work of art.

Golinitchev was the first one to express the opinion that the painter was envious of Wronsky.

"What makes him furious," he said, "is to see a man rich, well-born, and generally fortunate, attain without much trouble a position in art as good as, if not better, than his own. He has consecrated his whole life to painting; but you possess a culture of spirit which such a man as Mikhaïlof can never hope to attain to." With all of which, it must be owned, Wronsky was very far from disagreeing, try as he might to fight the artist's battles behind his back.

The latter, for his part, was happy at being delivered from Golinitchev's discourses and Wronsky's pictures. He could not prevent these amateurs from their puerile attempts to fathom his own art, and yet, mixed with the amusement it afforded him, was a large amount of indignation. Wronsky's work produced a curious effect upon him; it caused him actual annoyance; it was ridiculous and pitiable.

Wronsky's infatuation for painting was of short duration. He was possessed of sufficient artistic instinct to recognize his own faults, and to see that the further he advanced the more marked they became. The discovery did not disturb his equanimity; he simply laid down his brush and abandoned painting without seeking to justify himself or explain the cause.

But life without any special occupation in a small Italian town became intolerable; he grew tired of the palace, of Golinitchev's perpetual society, of his Italian teacher, and the few travelers he occasionally met; he felt that he must change his present existence.

Anna was much surprised at his abrupt disenchantment, but consented very willingly to return to Russia. Wronsky was desirous of passing through St. Petersburg to transact some business which required his presence, and Anna hoped to be able to see her son. The summer they would spend in the country, upon the Wronsky family estate,

CHAPTER VI.

LEVINE had now been married for about three months. He was happy, though in a different fashion from what he had imagined, and, in spite of certain unforeseen delights, he was met at each step by some disillusion. Married life was very different from what he had anticipated. Formerly, when a mere youth, he had often smiled inwardly at what he looked upon as the small miseries of conjugal life—quarrels, jealousies, and unworthy preoccupations. His own condition, he thought, should never allow of such things, and he would prove an exception to the generality of husbands. And yet, here were these same smallnesses, these indefinable trifles which were able to disturb the current of life. Like most other men, he had imagined that his love would be completely satisfied in marriage; that it would bring him rest after his work: that his wife would be content to be worshiped and adored; and, in so thinking, he had totally ignored the fact that she also could claim some rights by reason of her own personality. Great was his surprise to discover that the innocent and charming Kitty was capable of forming an opinion for herself, and that, not only where domestic matters were concerned, but on broader questions and the more important topics of the day.

Their small and unimportant quarrels were a matter of surprise to him. He had never supposed that, even for a few moments, their relations toward each other could be anything but tender and affectionate; and here, even in the first days of marriage, disputes were not uncommon. Kitty would declare that he thought only of himself, and would close all argument by a furious burst of tears.

The reconciliation always followed very soon. Kitty, though she would not acknowledge it, felt that it was she who had been in the wrong, and would lavish such tenderness upon her husband as to increase, if possible, their mutual love. And yet these constant scenes had an effect upon both of them, and the first few months of the married life from which Levine had expected so much were by no means devoid of painful memories.

One evening, when Levine returned home from a visit

to an outlying farm, and joined his wife in her own sitting-room, he found her reading a letter which had just arrived from her sister Dolly.

"Here is a letter for you," she said, holding out an envelope addressed in a strange handwriting. "I think it must be from—from that woman—your brother's—but I did not open it. Dolly sends me such a nice letter; she took little Grisha and Tania to a children's ball at the Sarinatzkys'."

But Levine was not listening. He had taken the letter, which he saw was from Marie Nicolaevna, the former mistress of his eccentric brother Nicolas, and glanced at it. It was the second communication he had lately received from her. The first told him that Nicolas had driven her away from him for no fault of hers, adding, with touching sincerity, that she herself wished for no assistance, but was solely anxious on his account. The second was different in tone. She had rejoined Nicolas, and set out, in his company, for a provincial town where he had received some official appointment; shortly, however, after arriving there he had quarreled with one of his chiefs, thrown up his appointment, and returned to Moscow. On the way he had been taken suddenly and dangerously ill. "He is constantly asking for you," the letter said, "and we have no more money left."

Kitty noticed that her husband was affected by what he was reading. "What has happened?" she asked.

"She writes that my brother Nicolas is dying. I must go to him."

Kitty's whole countenance was changed. The doings of her little nieces vanished from her mind.

"When shall you start?" she asked.

"To-morrow."

"Can I go with you?"

"Kitty! what an idea!" he exclaimed, almost reproachfully.

"And what is there strange in the idea?" asked Kitty, hurt at seeing her proposition received in this manner. "Why should I not accompany you? I shall not be in your way—"

"I myself am merely going because my brother is dying. What could you do there?" said Levine; and he thought: "At a moment like this, so serious for me, she

only thinks of the dullness of being left alone." "It is out of the question," he added, aloud.

His tone wounded Kitty still more.

"I tell you," she said, angrily, "that if you go I go also. I should like to know why it is out of the question. What reason have you for saying so?"

"Because God only knows in what wretched way-side inn I may find him," said Levine, striving to retain his calmness. "I am not even sure of the proper route to take. You would only hinder me."

"Not at all. I need nothing. Where you go I can go."

"You appear to forget this woman—a woman with whom you can not come in contact."

"And why? I have nothing to do with her history," said Kitty. "It is no business of mine. I only know that my husband's brother is dying; that my husband is going to him, and that I accompany him so that—"

"Kitty, do not be unreasonable. Think how it must vex me to see that when I am in such grief your only thought is not to be left alone. If you are afraid of being dull, you can go to Moscow while I am away."

"That is like you!" cried Kitty, with tears of anger in her eyes. "You always credit me with mean thoughts like that. I am not so weak and foolish; I feel that it is my duty to be with my husband at such a time, and you purposely wound me by pretending to misunderstand me."

"This is simple slavery!" cried Levine, rising from the table, no longer able to control himself. The words were hardly out of his mouth, when he perceived the injustice of them.

"Why did you marry me, then, if you already repent it?" and Kitty rushed from the room.

When he joined her, she was crying bitterly.

He strove to find words, not to persuade her, but to calm her; she would not listen, nor admit the truth of any of his arguments. He bent over her and kissed the hand she unwillingly let him hold, and still she kept silence. But when, at last, he took her face between his hands and spoke some loving words, she softened. The tears flowed again and the reconciliation was made.

They decided to set out together. Levine assured her that he was well aware her only object was to be of use to him, and that no awkwardness would arise from the pres-



ence of Marie Nicolaevna; but, at the bottom of his heart, he was annoyed with himself and with his wife. It was strange that he, who at one time could not credit his own happiness in being loved by her, now almost felt that it was possible to be too well loved. He looked forward with dread to the inevitable meeting of his wife and his brother's mistress; the idea of seeing them together in the same room filled him with horror and disgust.

CHAPTER VII.

THE provincial hotel where Nicolas Levine lay dying was even worse than Constantin had anticipated. It was a small, shabby, and ill-kept house, and its general appearance of dirt and discomfort affected him most painfully. The best rooms, such as they were, were occupied, and Levine and Kitty had to content themselves with a small, ill-furnished apartment, and the promise of better ones as soon as they should be vacated.

Levine, at his wife's request, left her to look after all arrangements and hurried to his brother's room. As he reached the door, he found himself face to face with Marie Nicolaevna, whom he had already met at his brother's house in Moscow.

"Well, how is he?" he asked.

"Very, very ill. He can not leave his bed, and asks continually for you. Is—is your wife with you?"

Levine, as he told her, fully expected that the news would render her confused; but she said quite naturally:

"Well, I will go down-stairs. He will be very glad to see you—and her also."

Before she could leave the room, the door of Kitty's room opened and she herself appeared. Seeing the position his wife was placed in, Levine blushed, and Marie Nicolaevna also; she leaned against the wall of the passage and nervously twisted her hands in her shawl, almost ready to cry. Levine noticed the momentary glance of curiosity which Kitty threw at Marie Nicolaevna.

"Well, what is it?" she asked her husband.

"We must not stand talking in the passage," he said, irritably.

"Then let us go in—or, rather, do you go alone. I will

wait in our own room," replied Kitty, as Marie Nicolaevna retreated down-stairs.

Levine entered his brother's room.

It was a small and stuffy room, badly furnished, unclean, and with great cracks in the plaster of the walls. Upon the tumble-down bed, barely covered with the dirty bed-linen, lay a body which at first sight seemed a corpse, so thin, emaciated, and washed away was it.

"Can this be my brother Nicolas?" thought Levine, but a second glance at the features, worn as they were, at once dispelled all doubt.

He took his brother's hand; the latter smiled, but so feebly as barely to change his features.

"You did not expect to find me like this," he said, feebly.

"Yes—no," answered Levine, confused. "Why did you not let me know sooner? I could not discover in what part of the country you were."

His brother said nothing, but continued to look at him, and Levine's embarrassment increased. He spoke of his wife having accompanied him, at which a look of satisfaction came upon the sick man's face. Then there was silence for a few moments, which Levine broke by saying that he would go for his wife. He was only too glad of an excuse to escape for a few seconds, and relieve his overstrained nerves.

But when once outside the room, he regretted that he had promised to bring his wife, and determined to persuade her that the visit would be useless. "Why should she be pained?" he asked himself.

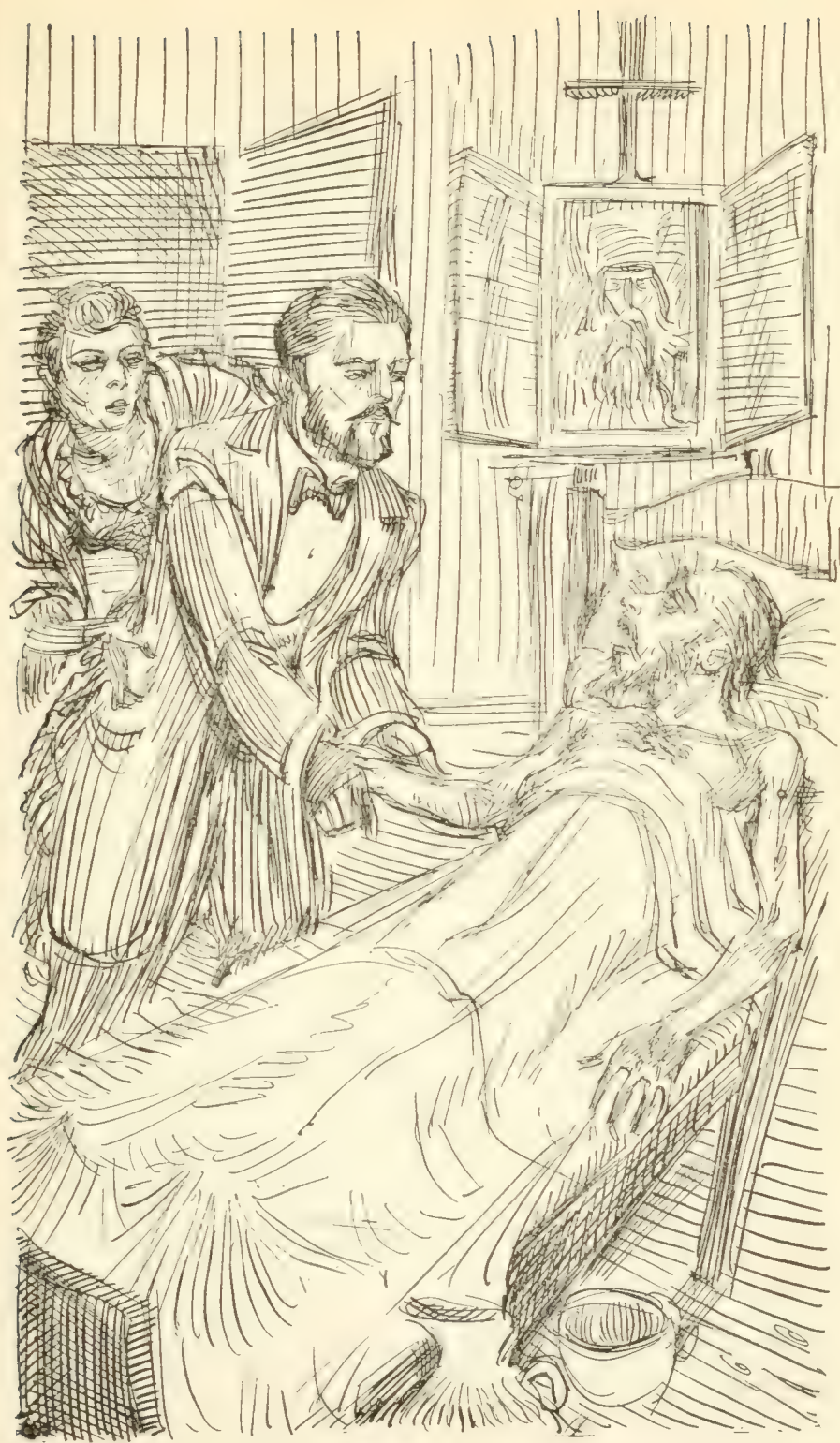
"Well, what is the matter?" asked Kitty, alarmed at the expression of his face.

"It is awful! Why—why did you come with me?"

Kitty was silent for an instant, and then, taking her husband's arm, she said in a gentle voice:

"Kostia, take me to him. It will be better for both of us. Take me to him and leave me with him. Can you not understand that it is much harder for me to witness your suffering, without having seen the cause? Perhaps I can be useful to him, and to you also. I beg of you to let me go," and there was deep entreaty in her voice.

Levine silently consented, and they left the room. He



had, for the moment, forgotten Marie Nicolaevna's existence.

Kitty walked lightly by her husband's side, her face full of courage and affection. When they entered the sick-chamber, she advanced to the opposite side of the bed so as not to cause the invalid to turn his head. She placed her young, fresh hand in that of the dying man, and began to speak with gentle animation.

"I am your sister," she said, "though you have never seen me, and, perhaps, have hardly heard of me; but a day never passes that Kostia does not remember you and distress himself at receiving no news of you."

The sick man's face was lighted up for an instant by a smile; but it soon faded, and the former expression of pain and suffering returned.

"I am afraid you are not very comfortable here," continued Kitty, avoiding his fixed look, and glancing round the room. "We must get another room for him, and one near it for ourselves," she said to her husband.

From that moment Kitty took entire charge of the sick man. As for Levine, unused to the ministrations of a sick-room, overcome by its atmosphere, the complaints of the invalid, and the thousand other little disagreeables of severe illness, he was practically useless, and wandered in and out of his brother's room, unhappy in his presence, still more unhappy when away from him.

Kitty dispatched her husband to seek a new doctor, and during his absence effected a complete change in the sick-room. When Levine returned with the physician, he could hardly recognize the room or its principal occupant. The air was fresh and sweet, scented with some aromatic perfume; the bed and all its linen was clean and new, and Nicolas himself, supported by soft pillows, was washed and reclothed, and, sick though he might be, looking a different man. On every side were traces of the handiwork of Kitty herself, her maid, and Marie Nicolaevna.

The doctor whom Levine had brought with him made a careful examination, shook his head ominously, but without expressing his opinion at the moment, wrote out a prescription, and gave some general directions as to diet and treatment. When he had gone, Nicolas said something to his brother, who was only able to catch the one word "Katia," which he saw at once was the other's affection-

ate term for his sister-in-law. He called her to the bedside

"I feel much better now," the sick man murmured, "and it is entirely owing to you." He took her hand and made a motion as if he would have kissed it, but seemed to fear her displeasure, and contented himself with caressing it. "Let me turn upon my left side," he went on, "and then you must all go and get some sleep."

Kitty alone understood his words. With her husband's assistance she changed his position on the bed, rearranged his pillows, and made him comfortable. He now took his brother's hand in his, and Levine, not trusting himself to look, could feel that he had raised it to his hot and feverish lips. He feared that the sobs would rise to his own throat and choke his utterance; so, without a word, he hurriedly turned away and left the room.

CHAPTER VIII.

"Do you think that his recovery is possible?" asked Levine of his wife when they were alone.

Late as it was, he felt that he could neither eat, nor sleep, nor remain still for any length of time. The wonderful ease with which this young girl—his wife—had adapted herself to the needs of the sick chamber; the tender care with which she had treated his brother, anticipating his every want, cheering and consoling him; and in addition to all this, the attention she found time to bestow upon himself and his own comfort in a strange hotel, had impressed Levine to a marked degree, and made him the more conscious of his weakness and want of nerve, strong man though he might be.

"I asked the doctor," said Kitty, replying to her husband's question, "and he says he can not live more than three days at most. However, one can never tell. I am so glad I was able to induce him to receive extreme unction to-morrow."

It was seldom that the subject of religion was mentioned between the young husband and wife. Kitty was well aware of Constantin's views on such questions, or, perhaps, it would be more correct to say his want of them. She had determined to leave everything to time; and though, since her marriage, she continued her own relig-

ious duties with her accustomed enthusiasm and regularity, she abstained from all comment upon the difference of their opinions. She knew that at heart he was a good man and a good Christian—perhaps a better Christian than herself, she often thought.

“Yes,” said Levine, “this woman—Marie Nicolaevna—would never have been able to persuade him. I will own to you that I am very, very glad you came with me. You have changed disorder into order, discomfort into comfort.” He took her hand and pressed it, and she could read contrition in his eyes.

“You could not have borne it alone,” she said, striving to hide the blush of happiness on her cheeks. “I learned a great deal about sickness when I was abroad last year. I was an invalid myself, you know.”

The sacrament was administered to Nicolas next day, and he received it with strange fervor, his face full of passionate supplication and hope as he gazed upon the holy image. Levine, as he stood near and watched him, was filled with troubled thoughts and doubts.

“God, if Thou dost exist,” he said to himself, “heal this, my brother, and Thou wilt save us both!”

The sick man’s condition seemed wonderfully improved after the religious ceremony. He was even able to sit up and take some solid food; but after that he fell into a short sleep, from which he woke with a return of all the worst symptoms, and exhausted by a succession of terrible fits of coughing.

Levine sat by his bedside, holding his hand, throughout the night. Once or twice, when he thought that Nicolas was sleeping calmly, he tried to rise and steal quietly away, but always the sick man would move uneasily and whisper in a troubled voice, “Don’t leave me; don’t go away.” It was not until day came that Levine was able to obtain any sleep.

His condition remained almost unchanged for the three following days. It was now plain to every one, even to the dying man himself, that recovery was hopeless. His sufferings became intense, and each one of those by his bedside was secretly longing for the moment when release should come.

Kitty herself had given way at last, and was forced to submit herself to the doctor’s advice and care; he ordered

complete rest and quiet, but she was obstinate in her refusal to keep entirely away from the sick-room, and persisted in at least sitting by the bedside and occupying herself with embroidery or other work.

Toward evening, on the fifth day, Nicolas became so weak as to be unable to move his arms; his face took a fixed expression which did not change in the least even when his brother or sister-in-law bent over him—it was doubtful whether he could still see them. Kitty sent for the priest once more, to recite the prayers for those in their last anguish.

Nicolas gave no sign of life beyond, when the prayers were over, uttering a slight sigh and opening once his eyes. The priest laid the cross upon his cold forehead, and laying his hand upon that of the dying man, said quietly, “It is over.”

Then Nicolas’s lips trembled slightly, his chest heaved, and in the stillness of the room the words were heard: “Not yet—soon—”

The next instant his face was lightened up, a smile passed on to his lips, and all was over.

* * * * *

Levine’s grief was bitter. At times it seemed as if but for his wife’s presence he would have given way entirely to his despair. This death had filled his whole being with terror, but a terror which made clear to him his need of living and loving.

Hardly had he witnessed the accomplishment of one mystery—that of death—than a new miracle even more strange was presented to him—that of life. The doctor announced that Kitty was *enceinte*.

CHAPTER IX.

WHEN Karénine, through the offices of Oblowsky and the Princess Betsy, learned that every one, and Anna most of all, expected him to relieve his wife of his presence, he was intensely troubled. Incapable for the time being of acting on his own responsibility, he ended by accepting all that was proposed to him.

He hardly realized the true meaning of it until the day after Anna’s departure, when the English governess came to him to ask whether she should for the future dine with

him down-stairs, or, as formerly, in the school-room. For the first few days, he continued to hold his receptions, to repair to the meetings of the Council, and to dine at home, as had always been his custom; his one effort was to appear calm and indifferent. He answered all the questions put to him by the servants in regard to future arrangements, as if their mistress's departure was a matter of course, and in no way extraordinary. The effort lasted over two days; on the third, the strain became too great. He felt that his courage was not great enough for such a struggle; he ordered his carriage, and from that time either dined away from home or in the strictest privacy.

Karénine had lost his mother when he was but ten years of age; his father he had never known, and his brother and himself were left orphans with a moderate fortune between them, their education and bringing up being undertaken by an uncle, a man of influence and in high favor at Court. On completing his studies at the Gymnase and the University, Karénine, thanks to this same uncle, found a brilliant opening for an administrative career. He devoted himself entirely to his work, and possessed no intimate friends save only his brother, and he indeed left Russia for an indefinite mission abroad soon after the marriage of Alexis.

It was during his tenancy of a provincial governorship that Karénine became acquainted with Anna's aunt—a woman of great wealth—who schemed and planned for the marriage of her niece to the newly appointed governor.

At last there came a day when Alexis Alexandrovitch recognized that he must either ask the girl's hand in marriage or resign his office. For some time he hesitated, and might eventually have chosen the less risky course had not a friend of Anna's relative pointed out to him that, by his marked attentions, he had compromised the girl, and, as a man of honor, should declare himself.

He did so; and from that moment, first upon his finances and then upon his wife, he showered the entire amount of affection his nature was capable of.

His attachment for her sufficed to him in place of any other intimacies. He had numerous relations, a large acquaintance among the most prominent and influential people, was always ready to entertain socially, or be entertained; but that was the limit of his cordiality.

The only intimates that he had in St. Petersburg were the chief of his own cabinet and his physician. The former, Michel Wassilievitch Sludine, a brave gentleman, simple, honest, and intelligent, was full of sympathy for him. But the traditions and unwritten laws of public service placed a barrier between them which prevented all confidence. Many a time, after they had transacted some business together, Karénine was sorely tempted to open his heart to his subordinate; but when the moment came, he felt that his lips must remain closed on that one topic, and in place of the confidence he longed for, he would close the interview with some cut and dried formula of official routine.

The doctor, whose goodness of heart was equally well known to Karénine, was a very busy man, and it seemed, as if by some tacit but well-recognized understanding, that this one subject was to remain tabooed.

As for his ordinary friends, and chief among them the Countess Lydia, Karénine never for a moment dreamed of unbosoming himself to them. He was almost afraid of women, and did his best, as a rule, to shun them.

CHAPTER X.

BUT if Karénine, in reviewing his possible confidants, had omitted to think of the Countess Lydia, she, for her part, thought much of him.

Her first visit to him was made at the moment when he sat with his head bowed between his hands, overwhelmed by his despair. She entered his library without waiting to be announced, her bosom heaving with emotion and agitation.

"Alexis Alexandrovitch, my friend!" she exclaimed, "I know all!" and she pressed his hand in hers, looking in his face with her beautiful, deep eyes.

He rose in some confusion, and placed a chair for her.

"Be seated, countess," he said, with trembling lips. "I am suffering too much to receive visitors."

"My dear friend!" she simply repeated; but he could see that the tears were very near her eyes. He raised her hand to his lips and kissed it.

"I am utterly broken down," he continued; "weak and powerless. It is not my loss that I feel so much as my shame in the eyes of the world. If you could only know

all the details! A man's strength has its limits, countess, and the limits of mine have been reached. Every action of my day brings to my mind my solitary situation. Servants, governess, household accounts, all serve to constantly remind me. Yesterday, at dinner, I could not bear my little son's looks—he is afraid of me.”

“I understand, my friend, I understand everything,” said the countess. “I can not hope to bring you any real help or consolation; but I have come to offer you my services, to try and relieve you from these wretched little cares and anxieties which should not be allowed to trouble you. A woman's hand is needed here; let me offer you mine.”

Karénine was silent, and merely pressed her hand.

“We will both occupy ourselves with little Serge,” she went on. “I have had little experience with children, but sufficient to be able to assist you. You must not thank me—it is not I who do it—”

“Not thank you!”

“No, my friend,” replied the countess, whose one weakness was for religion and religious motives in all her acts; “you must thank Him to whom you must pray. In Him alone can we find true peace, consolation, and love!”

Though at another time such expressions might have seemed superfluous and have displeased him, Karénine, in his present distress, was inclined to make allowances, to recognize the meaning rather than the words.

“I am more than grateful to you for your words and your promises,” he said.

The countess again took his hand in hers.

“Now I am going to commence at once,” she said, wiping from her cheek the traces of her tears. “I am going to see Serge. I shall appeal to you in every serious matter.”

She rose and went to the child's nursery. There, while her tears fell upon the boy's cheeks, she told him that his father was a saint, and that his mother was dead. From that time she fulfilled her promise, and relieved Karénine from most of his domestic anxieties. She had not exaggerated, however, in speaking of her own inexperience, and the more important direction of the household affairs soon passed into the hands of Karénine's *valet de chambre*, Kornei. The countess, however, was quite content; her chief aim was the consolation of Karénine himself and his

conversion to her own pronounced religious views. She meant that her affection and esteem should prove a moral support for him, and, despite her methods, her end was by no means unsuccessful.

CHAPTER XI.

THE Countess Lydia had been married when still a young girl. Her husband was a young man of great wealth, excellent family, and dissipated to an exceptional degree.

Two months after their marriage he left her, responding to her effusive tenderness with an ironical almost diabolical smile, the meaning of which was hard to fathom. The count's good nature was known to every one, and Lydia, romantic as she was, had never laid herself open to the world's criticism. Since then husband and wife, though not legally separated, had lived apart from each other, the count's invariable greeting to her being the same mysterious, bitter smile.

Having long ago removed her husband from the list of her adorers, the countess had so far made a point of never being without a favorite—sometimes, indeed, she had several simultaneously—and, whether it were man or woman, the one qualification she insisted on was, that he or she should be in some way known to fame. At different times it had been some prince or princess newly allied to the imperial family; at others her favor had been bestowed upon a metropolitan, a grand vicar, a noted journalist, a celebrated doctor, an English missionary and many others in rapid succession, the last of whom was Karénine. Her feelings toward him soon merged from mere interest into affection; she felt that she had liked none so well as him. More than once she found herself thinking of what might have been had they both been free.

For several days the countess had been much perturbed in mind. She had heard of the return of Wronsky and Anna to St. Petersburg, and was sorely puzzled as to how she could most surely spare Karénine the pain of seeing his wife again.

The next news that reached her was that the guilty couple, having attended to their affairs, were about to leave the city the next day, and she was just commencing to feel

reassured, when a note was brought to her, whose address she recognized as in the handwriting of Anna.

"Who brought this?" she asked.

"A messenger from the hotel," was the reply.

For some time the countess sat without the courage to open the letter. When she grew calmer she tore open the envelope and read:

"MADAME LA COUNTESS,—The sentiments of Christianity with which I know your heart to be filled give me the courage to address you. I am unfortunate enough to be separated from my son, and ask your permission to see him once before my departure. My reason for not addressing myself directly to Alexis Alexandrovitch is that this generous man may be spared the pain of being troubled with my affairs. Knowing your friendship for him, I have thought that you would understand me in this. Will you send Serge to see me?—or, should you prefer it, I will come at any hour and to any place you may think best. When I think of the nobleness of character of her who must decide this, a refusal seems to me impossible. You can not imagine how I am longing to see my child again, nor the gratitude I shall forever feel toward you for lending me your support in this matter.
ANNA."

The whole contents of the note irritated the Countess Lydia beyond expression, more especially the allusions to Karénine's nobility of mind, and the general tone of easiness with which it was worded.

"Say that there is no answer," she said to the servant; and sitting down at the table, she wrote to Karénine, begging him to come to her as soon as possible, as she had something of importance to consult with him about.

It was rarely that a day passed in which the countess did not send Karénine two or three notes or messages. She enjoyed the little mystery, and the suggestion of familiarity which this means of communicating with him implied.

When Karénine entered the Countess Lydia's boudoir, she was seated at a table on which tea had been prepared, and was evidently anxiously awaiting him.

"At last!" she exclaimed, rising to greet him. "Now we can be alone and quiet here while we take our tea."

Then she added: "I have received a note from *her*. She is in here in St. Petersburg;" and with a blush upon her face, she held out Anna's letter.

He read it, and was silent for some time.

"I do not think that I have the right to refuse her," he said at last.

"My dear friend, you can see no bad in anything."

"On the contrary, I find bad in everything. But would it be just?" and his look expressed his indecision, his desire for another's advice, for some one to lean upon.

"There are limits to everything," said the countess, firmly. "I can understand immorality; but what I can not understand is such wanton cruelty. And toward whom? Toward you! How can she remain in the same place where you are? One is never too old to learn; and every day I learn more and more of your goodness and her baseness."

"Who shall be the one to cast the first stone?" said Karénine. "Having once pardoned her, can I refuse her the one need of her heart, her love for the child?"

"But is this love? Is it all sincere? You have forgiven her, and will do so still further, I hope. But are we justified in troubling the mind of this poor little child? He believes her to be dead; he prays for her and asks God's pardon for her. What would he think now?"

"I have not looked at it in that light," said Karénine, feeling the justice of her reasoning.

The countess covered her face with her hands, and was silent for some moments.

"If you ask my advice," she said, at last, slowly, "you will not grant this permission. Can I not see how you suffer, how your wound still bleeds? Even supposing you put aside your own feelings, what will it lead to? You will be bringing new suffering and new trouble to the child. If she had any feelings of humanity left, she would be the first to acknowledge this. No; I should be firm in your place; and if you will authorize me, I will answer her."

Alexis Alexandrovitch consented, and the countess wrote as follows:

"MADAME,—Such a meeting could not take place without causing your son to ask questions concerning matters which it were better he should never know of.

“On these grounds you will understand that your husband’s refusal is made in all Christian charity.

“I pray that the Almighty may be merciful to you.

“COUNTESS LYDIA.”

The effect of this reply produced the effect which the countess resolutely conceded from herself—it wounded Anna to the very bottom of her soul. Karénine, on his part, returned home troubled in his mind, unable to attend to his usual occupations, nor to find peace within himself.

He could not drive out from his mind the cruel reminiscences of the past. He recalled Anna’s first confession. Why had he not compelled her to respect the conditions and decencies of her world? Why—and this thought troubled him most of all—why had he not challenged Wronsky? His first letter to his wife, his usual forgiveness, the care he bestowed upon her infant, all came back to his memory and filled his heart with shame and confusion.

“But in what have I myself been to blame?” he asked himself. It cost him a terrible effort to drive away these thoughts and to remember the line of conduct he had laid down for himself—peace and charity toward all. His present suffering made any future reward seem like some empty dream. Happily the struggle did not last long. Karénine gradually recovered his calmness and the elevation of his spirit, thanks to which he was able, in some measure, to forget.

CHAPTER XII.

WRONSKY and Anna were staying at one of the principal hotels of St. Petersburg.

On the first day of his arrival, Wronsky went to his brother’s house, and there met his mother, whom some business had brought to St. Petersburg. Both she and his sister-in-law, Maria, received him as usual, questioned him about his travels, gossiped about their mutual friends, but made no allusion whatever to Anna. His brother, calling on him the next day, was the first to speak of her. Alexis took the opportunity of explaining to him that he regarded his *liaison* with Madame Karénine as a virtual mar-

riage, and that he desired his mother and sister-in-law to clearly understand his intentions.

"The world may not approve it," he added, "but that is a matter of indifference to me. If my own family, however, wish to remain on good terms with me, they must receive her as my wife."

His brother, who always paid great deference to his younger brother's opinions, did not attempt any solution of this knotty question, and called upon Anna in company with Alexis.

In spite of his knowledge of the world, Wronsky had fallen into a strange error. He, who better than most others, should have understood that Society's doors would be forever closed to them, imagined, through some strange process of reasoning, that public opinion would lay aside all old-fashioned prejudices, and receive him on his own terms. "In any case," he said to himself, "even if the official world is critical, our own relations and friends will understand things for what they are."

One of the first women of the fashionable world whom he met was his cousin, the Princess Betsy.

"At last!" she cried in a glad tone; "and Anna, how is she? Where are you staying? How commonplace and dull St. Petersburg must seem to you after your travels! And the divorce—is it all arranged?"

Her enthusiasm, Wronsky noticed, visibly decreased when she heard that no divorce had as yet been obtained.

"I know they blame me," she said; "but I am coming to see Anna. You will not remain here for long, I suppose?" As a matter of fact, she called upon Anna that same day, but her tone had now completely changed. She seemed to wish to call attention to the fact that her visit to Anna was an astonishing proof of friendship. After chattering for ten minutes, she rose and said, as she took her leave: "You have told me nothing about the divorce. Of course I myself am not foolishly prejudiced, but I warn you that others may have different views, and will be correspondingly chilly in their manner. It could be so easily arranged, too! You leave Thursday, you say? I am sorry we shall not see more of you."

Betsy's tone had opened Wronsky's eyes in some degree to the reception which awaited them. He wished, however, to make another experiment with his own family.

He was very sure that his mother, in spite of her attractions toward Anna when they first met, would now be inexorable toward one whom she deemed had ruined her son's career; but he rested great hopes on Maria, his sister-in-law. She, for certain, would have no stone to fling at Anna, and would come to see her as a matter of course.

The next day he called on her, and, finding her alone, stated his case.

"You know, Alexis, how much I think of you," she answered, "and how devoted I am to your interests; but what has sorely grieved me is the impossibility of my being of any service to Anna. Do not imagine for one moment that I allow myself to judge her; I might, perhaps, have acted just as she has, had I been in her place. I do not wish to go into any details," she said, nervously, noticing the cloud upon his brow; "but it is sometimes absolutely necessary to call things by their right name. You would have me call upon her so that, in turn, I could receive her in my own house and reinstate her in society. I simply *can not* do so. My daughters are growing up; I am forced, if only on my husband's account, to go into society. Supposing that I did visit Anna Arcadieвна, I should still be unable to invite her to my house for fear lest she should meet some one holding different views from my own. Would it not simply wound her? It is not in my power to raise her up—"

"I do not for one moment admit that she has fallen," interrupted Wronsky, rising from his seat; "nor would I think of comparing her to scores of women whom you receive."

He was sure that his sister-in-law would not yield.

"Alexis, please do not be angry; it is not my fault," said Maria, with an attempt to smile.

"I do not blame you," he replied; "but my trouble is now doubled. I regret that our friendship should be broken off, or, at least, strained; but you must surely understand that it is inevitable."

With these words he left her; and being now convinced of the hopelessness of any further attempts, he determined to look upon himself as one in a strange place, and to run no risk of additional repulses.

In addition to all this, Anna's own bearing annoyed him. He now saw in her some strange moral disposition

which he himself could not fathom; she was affectionate and cold in turn, but constantly irritable and mysterious in her manner. There was plainly something on her mind which troubled her, and instead of perceiving how her conduct at times caused Wronsky suffering, she appeared to be simply preoccupied in concealing her own cares and perfectly indifferent to aught else.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE one thought which filled Anna's mind on her return to St. Petersburg was to see her son. "It was a simple and natural thing," she thought, "to see one's own child when living in the same town with him. But as the time passed on, the difficulty of obtaining such an interview seemed to increase.

How was she to act? She could not call at her husband's house and run the risk of being refused admission, nor could she bring herself to write to Karénine. The old nurse who formerly had charge of Serge, and who would have assisted the mother, had left the house. After two days of doubt and indecision, Anna decided to write to the Countess Lydia.

To see the messenger return without an answer was a cruel disappointment to her. She felt wounded and humiliated, even though she was forced to admit that the countess had reason on her side.

She had no one in whom to confide, and this, perhaps, was worst of all. She knew that Wronsky would not understand; that he would treat the matter as one of no great importance, and that his want of sympathy would enrage her. The greatest fear she had was lest she should sometimes grow to hate him. She would say nothing to him of her plans to see her child.

At last she decided to write directly to her husband.

At the very moment she was commencing the letter, the Countess Lydia's answer was brought to her. Silence she could have borne, but the animosity, the irony which she was able to read between the lines of this note, revolted her.

"What cruelty! what hypocrisy!" she thought. "They wish to wound me and to torture the child. I will not let



them do it. She is far worse than I—I, at least, am not a liar!"

The next morning early, Anna stepped from a carriage, and rang the bell of her former home. On the way, she had bought a large box of his favorite sweetmeats for the child, and in her hand she held sufficient money with which to bribe the servants, if necessary; her face was covered with a heavy veil.

The door was opened by a young footman whose face was strange to her.

"Whom do you wish to see, madame?" he asked.

"I come—I come from Prince Skaradoumof, to see Serge Alexeitch."

"He has not yet risen, madame," said the man, noticing her agitation, and striving to see her features through the veil which hid them.

She pressed some money in his hand.

"If your excellence will enter, I will go and see," he said. "I will inform his tutor."

He mounted the staircase, and Anna, with silent footsteps, followed him. Even now, through the quiet of the house, she could hear the boy's prattling voice.

"Let me go to him," she said, quickly. "I know the way."

She pushed her way into the room, and in a second was beside the little cot on which her son was lying.

"Serge! My darling boy!" she exclaimed in a voice choked with tears, as she passed her arms around the little white-robed body.

"Mamma! mamma!" he cried, nestling in her arms and gazing up at her with childish eyes still full of sleep.

The thought flashed across Anna that the boy was not as she had left him. He seemed older, and to have lost much of his childish plumpness; his limbs were so much larger than those of her Serge; but yet it was he himself, the dear little face, the eyes, the lips; it was her own little Serge!

"I knew you would come," he said, striving to open his sleepy eyes as wide as possible. "It is my birthday. I will get up at once."

Anna devoured him with her eyes, she pressed him still closer to her heart, and her tears now hindered her from speaking.

"Why do you cry, mamma?" he asked, now wide awake. "Why do you cry?" and his own tears were near.

"I—I will not cry any more, darling—it is from joy. It is so long since I have seen you. It is all over now," she said, stifling her tears. "Now you must get up and dress;" and without letting go his little hand, she sat on a chair beside the bed. "How do you manage to dress yourself without me? How—"

"Wassili Loukitch helps me. But you haven't seen him, have you? He will be here presently. But see; you are sitting upon my clothes!" and the child commenced to laugh.

Anna looked at him and smiled herself.

"Mamma, dearest!" he cried, throwing himself once more into her arms as he saw her smile.

"What did you think had become of me?" she asked. "Did you think that I was dead?"

"No; I never believed it."

"You did not believe it?"

"No; I knew very well it wasn't true;" and taking the hand which was stroking his head, he pressed the palm against his little mouth and kissed it over and over again.

"Koutia, dear," she murmured, using the name she had given him when he was a baby, "you will not forget me; you will not forget your—"

She could not finish.

There was so much she had come prepared to say to him, and now she could find no words. But Serge understood everything. He felt that his mother loved him, and that she was unhappy; he knew that his father was concerned in it, and that he—his father—must not meet his mother. What he could not understand was the expression of affright and shame on his mother's face. Of what was she afraid, and why did she blush? He would have liked to ask her, but dared not, for he knew it would be adding to her grief.

He pressed himself against her and murmured:

"Don't go yet, mamma. He will not be here for some time."

His mother held him from her for one moment to try and read from his face whether he knew what he was saying. The child's expression told her that he had spoken of his father.

"Serge, my boy," she said, "you must love him. He is better than I am, and I have been to blame toward him. When you are older, you will know."

"None is better than you," cried the child, throwing his trembling little arms about her neck.

"My dearest! my dearest!" exclaimed Anna, herself now weeping.

At this moment the door opened, and the tutor, Wassili Loukitch, entered the room. Serge fell upon his bed sobbing, and covered his face with his hands. Anna drew the hands aside, and lavishly kissed the little, tear-stained cheeks, quickly left the room.

In the passage she came face to face with her husband. He stood still at sight of her and bent his head.

Though, a moment before, Anna had said that he was better than she, the one rapid glance that she directed toward him was full of hatred, distrust, and jealousy on her son's account. She lowered her veil and almost ran from the house. When she regained her carriage, she saw that in her haste she had left upon the seat the sweetmeats chosen with such sad and loving care for the child she had just parted from.

CHAPTER XIV.

ANNA, although she had prepared herself beforehand, had not expected that the sight of her son would cause her such great emotion. When she was once more in her rooms at the hotel, she asked herself why she had gone. "All is over now," she said to herself; "I am quite alone!" and sinking into a chair, she abandoned herself to a succession of sad thoughts and remembrances.

The Italian nurse entered the room, carrying her little daughter, dressed to go out. The child, seeing its mother, smiled and beat the air with its little hands, stretching them out toward Anna.

She took the infant upon her lap, fondling it, and kissing the dimpled fingers; but even the sight of this, her little daughter, merely recalled to her her great love for Serge.

In former days all her tenderness had been lavished upon him, the child of a man whom she had never loved; and her little daughter, born under such sad conditions, had

never received a hundredth part of the care which had been bestowed upon Serge. Having given the child back to its nurse and seen them set out for their walk, Anna opened a locket which contained a portrait of Serge at the same age as the little girl; then she opened an album and took from it all the other portraits she could find of him.

As she was closing the book, her eyes fell upon a photograph of Wronsky taken when they were in Rome.

"There he is," she said to herself, and suddenly called to mind that he was the author of all her sufferings. During the whole morning she had not thought of him, but the sight of his picture filled her heart with love.

"Where is he? Why does he leave me here alone with my grief?" she asked herself, bitterly, forgetting that she had carefully concealed from him the visit to her son. She immediately sent a message to his room, asking him to come to her, and waited for him, her heart beating in anticipation of the tender words with which he would console her. The servant returned to say that Wronsky was entertaining friends, but wished to know if she would receive him with Prince Yashvine, who had just arrived in St. Petersburg. "He does not care to come alone," she thought, "though I have not seen him since yesterday, before dinner. I can say nothing to him, as Yashvine will be with him." And then came the cruel thought: "If he should have ceased to love me!"

She reviewed in her memory several incidents of the past few days, and found what she thought was confirmation of this terrible idea. The previous evening he had not dined with her—he had passed the night in his own room, or, at least, not in hers—and now, as if fearing a *tête-à-tête*, he was coming to her accompanied by a friend. "But it is his duty," she said to herself, "to confess it to me, and mine to find out for myself. If it be true, I know well what to do." She rang for her maid, and changed her costume with more than her usual care.

When she entered her sitting-room again, the first person that she noticed was Prince Yashvine examining the portraits of Serge which she had left upon the table.

"We are old acquaintances," she said, advancing to the prince, a man of gigantic stature, and laying her small hand in his tremendous palm. "We met at the races last year, I think;" and with a rapid movement she gathered

up the photographs from the table and handed them to Wronsky. "Was this year's meeting successful?" she continued. "We saw the races at Rome, on the Corso. But I know you take no interest in foreign life. Though we have met so seldom, I think I know your tastes."

"I regret to hear it, for I fear they are generally bad," said Yashvine, gnawing his long mustache.

After a few minutes' conversation, the prince, noticing that Wronsky was looking at his watch, rose to take his leave, and asked Anna if she intended to remain in St. Petersburg for any length of time.

"I think not," she answered, with a troubled look at Wronsky.

"Then we may not meet again," said Yashvine; and turning to Wronsky: "Where do you dine to-night?"

"Come and dine with me," said Anna, quickly, and with a slight blush. "The dinner here, perhaps, is not very good; but you can see for yourself, and I know how glad Alexis will be of your company."

"I shall be delighted," said Yashvine, with evident sincerity. "It is *au revoir*, then?" and left the room.

"Are you going also?" Anna asked Wronsky.

"I am late already. Go on; I will follow you," he called to his friend.

She took his hand, and looking in his face, tried to speak to him of what she had been thinking.

"I have something to ask you," she said, pressing his hand against her cheek. "Was I wrong to invite him to dinner?"

"You were perfectly right," answered Wronsky, with a quiet smile.

"Alexis, you have not changed in your feelings toward me?" she asked, still holding his hand between her own.

"I can not stay here any longer. When do we leave?"

"Oh, soon. You have no idea how unpleasant being here is to me also," and he drew his hand away.

"Well, go if you must," she said in a wounded tone, and walked quickly into her private room.

CHAPTER XV.

WHEN Wronsky returned to the hotel, Anna was not there. He was informed that she had gone out with a

lady. The fact of her having gone out without leaving any message, joined to her recent agitation and the tone in which she had spoken to him, set Wronsky thinking. He decided to wait for her and ask an explanation.

Anna was not alone when she came back. One of her aunts—an old maid, the Princess Oblowsky—had been shopping with her, and, as if unconscious of Wronsky's uneasiness of manner, Anna began to give a humorous account of all that they had seen and done. The expression of her eyes, however, and her nervous movement told him that she herself was also far from easy.

They were on the point of sitting down to dinner, which was laid for four, when Touthkewitch, an intimate friend of the Princess Tverskoï, was announced. He was the bearer of a message from Betsy to Anna. Betsy sent her excuses for not being able to call and say good-bye, and begged that Anna would come and see her between eight and nine, as she herself was indisposed. Wronsky looked at Anna, to see how she would take the invitation—evidently given for an hour when she would not be likely to meet any one else—but Anna seemed not to notice it.

"I am very sorry," she said, with an almost imperceptible smile, "but I shall not be free at that hour."

"The princess will regret it exceedingly, I am sure."

"And I also," said Anna.

"Perhaps you are going to hear Patti?" asked Touthkewitch.

"Patti? You have given me an idea—I would certainly go if I could get a box."

"I think I can get one for you," said Touthkewitch.

"I should be very much obliged," replied Anna; "but will you not stay and dine with us?"

Wronsky shrugged his shoulders. He could not understand her. Why had she brought the old princess with her? why asked Touthkewitch to dinner? and, more especially, why did she wish for a box? Could she, in her position, think of going to the opera on a subscription night? The whole of St. Petersburg would be there. He looked at her questioningly, but she was careful to avoid his eye.

After dinner, through the whole of which Anna had been exceptionally gay and lively, Touthkewitch went away to obtain the box, while Yashvine and Wronsky repaired to

the latter's rooms for their cigars. After some time Wronsky returned to Anna's apartments and found her in full evening dress.

"Are you really going to the opera?" he asked.

"Why ask the question with such a frightened air? I can see no reason why I should not go."

"No, I suppose there is no reason," he said, frowning.

"That is precisely what I said myself," she replied, tranquilly, drawing on her long, perfumed glove.

"Anna, in Heaven's name, what has come over you?" he exclaimed, seeking, as her own husband had often done, to awaken her from some trance or dream.

"I do not understand what you wish."

"You know very well that you can not go there."

"Why not? I shall not be alone. The princess has gone to change her costume, and will accompany me."

Again he raised his shoulders, discouraged.

"Do you not know—?" he began.

"I know nothing," she cried; "and I wish to know nothing. I do not repent of anything that I have done. I would do it all over again. There is only one thing of importance between you and myself, and that is to know if we love each other. The rest is nothing. Why do we live here cut off from all the world? Why can I not go where I wish? I love *you*, and if you have not changed toward me, nothing else matters to me. Why do you look at me like that?"

He was looking at her wonderful beauty, and this very beauty and elegance was precisely what irritated him.

"You know very well that my feelings can never change; but I beg you not to go."

Though his face was stern and cold, there was entreaty in his voice.

She merely noticed his looks, and answered in a tone of annoyance:

"And I—I beg you to explain to me why I should not go."

"Because it will subject you—" he paused, troubled.

"I do not understand you. Touthkewitch can not compromise me; and, as for the princess, she is no worse than any one else. Ah! here she is!"

CHAPTER XVI.

FOR perhaps the first time in his life, Wronsky was fairly angry. What troubled him was his inability to explain to Anna that, in appearing at the opera with a person like the princess, she was throwing down the glove to public opinion, which would vote her a lost woman, and effectually dissipate any chance of her re-entrance into society.

"Why does she not understand?" he asked himself. "What is passing within her?"

He found Yashvine still smoking and consuming vast quantities of brandy and soda. For a time they resumed their talk of horses, racing, and other kindred matters; but Wronsky could not drive from his mind the thought of Anna and her strange behavior, and Yashvine soon saw that his companion was ill at ease and paying little heed to his own remarks.

"Well, let us go," he said at last. "It is getting late."

"No, I shall not go," said Wronsky, gloomily.

"Very well," replied the other; "I must, for I promised. *Au revoir*. If you change your mind, you had better take Krasinski's stall—you will find it vacant."

"A wife is sometimes tiresome," thought the prince as he left the hotel, "but a mistress is still worse."

Wronsky sat alone, thinking over all that had happened, and picturing Anna exposed to the gaze and criticisms of the whole of St. Petersburg society.

"And I? Why am I afraid?" he suddenly said to himself. "Why have I left it to Toushkewitch to protect her? It is absurd. Why has she placed me in such a foolish position?"

He rose from his chair, rang for his valet, and dressed himself for the opera.

When he reached the theater, the brilliant and crowded audience was listening breathlessly to the liquid notes of the great prima-donna. When her song was ended and the house rang with applause, he made his way to the vacant seat and examined the rows of boxes through his lorgnette.

His eyes soon discovered Anna sitting in front of a box above him, tapping one hand gently with her fan and looking straight before her with the evident intention of disre-

garding something which was passing beside her. Yashvine was by her side, and from the way in which he was biting his huge mustache, a heavy frown upon his face, it was plain that he, too, was ill at ease.

In the box next to them were the Kartasofs, people with whom Anna had formerly been intimate. Madame Kartasof, a small, thin woman, was standing up, her back turned upon Anna, and arranging on her shoulders the cloak which her husband held for her; her face was pale, as if with anger, and she was speaking hurriedly and with agitation.

The husband, a stout, bald-headed man, while glancing at Anna, was using all his efforts to calm his wife. In a few moments their box was empty.

Though Wronsky understood nothing of the scene, he felt sure that something had happened to humiliate Anna. He quickly left his seat, for the *entr'acte* was now in progress, and went upstairs to his brother's box. His mother was sitting there, while Maria and a friend were standing, talking by the open door. Maria at once took Wronsky's arm and led him to one side.

"It was vile and mean!" she exclaimed, excitedly. "Madame Kartasof had no right to do it!"

"What was it? I know nothing at all," he said.

"Have you not heard?"

"You know very well that there are some things which I am the last to hear. What has Madame Kartasof done?"

"It was my husband who told me. She has insulted Madame Karénine. Her husband spoke to Madame Karénine, in the next box to theirs, and she made a scene—she used some offensive term in a loud tone and then left the box."

At this moment his mother sent for Wronsky to come and speak to her.

"I am always expecting you," she said as he entered the box; "but nowadays I never see you. How is it that you are not paying court to Madame Karénine? She has made the sensation of the evening. Even Patti is forgotten."

"I have begged you not to talk to me like that," said Wronsky, gravely.

"I only say what all the world says."

Wronsky said no more on the subject, and presently left

the box. He felt that he had some duty to perform—but what? He was full of anger, furious at the false position in which Anna had placed herself and him, and yet he felt a great pity for her.

He entered her box.

“It seems to me,” said Anna, addressing him, “that you have come very late; you have certainly missed the best piece,” and her tone was bitter and mocking.

“I am a poor judge,” he answered, looking at her with a serious look.

“Like Prince Yashvine,” she said, with a smile, “who thinks that Patti sings too loud.”

As she finished speaking, a tremor passed her lips. She rose from her seat and retired to the back of the box.

The last act had hardly commenced, when Wronsky, looking up from his seat, saw that Anna’s box was empty. He left the theater and returned to the hotel.

Anna had just arrived. When he entered the room, she was sitting on the nearest sofa, looking straight before her, just as she had been when he first saw her at the opera. She threw a glance at him, but did not move.

“Anna—” he began.

“It is you—you who are the cause of everything!” she cried, rising from her seat, tears of rage and despair in her voice.

“I prayed you, I begged you not to go. I knew that you were drawing something disagreeable on yourself.”

“Disagreeable!” she interrupted. “It was horrible! If I were to live for a hundred years, I could never forget it. She said that she was disgraced by sitting near me!”

“The speech of a fool! But why have you risked it? Why expose yourself to—”

“I hate your quietness. You should not have driven me to this. If you had any love for me—”

“Anna, why talk like that now?”

“Yes, I say again, if you loved me as I love you; if you suffered as I am suffering—” and there was a look of absolute terror on her face.

He was filled with pity for her, and began to protest his love, which he saw was the only means of calming her; but, at the bottom of his heart, he felt angry and bitter toward her.

She, on the contrary, greedily drank in his words of love, and, by degrees, recovered her composure.

Two days later they left St. Petersburg for the country, completely reconciled.

PART FIFTH.

CHAPTER I.

THE invitation which Levine and his wife extended to Dolly and the Princess Cherbatzky to pass the summer on their estate was readily accepted. Stépane, so far as his wife was concerned, was delighted with the arrangement. His own country house was in sad need of repairs, and as his occupations compelled his frequent presence in Moscow, he was only able to join the party from time to time. Like most mothers, the Princess Cherbatzky considered her presence indispensable for the well-being of Kitty in her present state of health, and watched the young wife's every movement with maternal solicitude and care.

It was not long before Dolly discovered that Wronsky and Anna were spending the summer at a small estate of the former's, distant some seventy versts from the Levine mansion. She at once made up her mind to visit Anna, of whom, in former times, she had always been extremely fond, and who, in any case, was her own husband's sister.

With some hesitation she announced her intention to Levine, asking him where she could best hire horses and a conveyance for the journey.

"Why should you imagine that I could feel at all annoyed at the idea of your meeting Wronsky?" he said, "and, moreover, you will really offend me if you talk about using any other horses than mine, even if I would allow you to hire them. Those you would get could never make a trip of seventy versts."

So Dolly was forced to submit, and on the appointed day she set out, entirely alone, in a roomy, old-fashioned carriage of Levine's.

The drive was long and uninteresting, and the afternoon was well advanced when the carriage, containing its tired

and dusty occupant, entered the grounds of Wronsky's house.

Anna and Wronsky met her on the steps in front of the house.

"Dolly! What an unlooked-for pleasure!" cried Anna, embracing her. "You can not tell how glad I am to see you! Alexis"—turning to Wronsky—"is it not nice?"

He raised his hat and greeted Dolly cordially. "Your visit makes us both very happy," he said; and then, addressing Anna: "What room shall we give the princess?"

"The corner room, facing the balcony—it is nearest to my own. I hope you are going to stay some time with us, Dolly. What? Only one day? Impossible!"

"I have promised to return to-morrow on account of the children," said Dolly.

"Oh, but it can not be! However, we will talk about that later on. Let me take you to your room now;" and with the gladness of a young girl, she led Dolly upstairs to the beautifully furnished chamber near her own.

"You are looking at me," she said, with a sigh, "and wondering how, in my position, I can be so happy. I will own that it is very wrong of me. But I am like one enchanted. My past unhappiness seems like a nightmare—especially since we came here."

"I am glad to hear you speak like that," said Dolly. "But why have you never written to me?"

"I had not the courage."

"Courage? To write to *me*? If you knew—"

"Tell me," said Anna, interrupting her, "what do you really think of me?"

"I think nothing," answered Dolly. "I love you, and have always loved you. When one loves a person, one loves her for what she is, not for what one, perhaps, would wish her to be."

"If I had not feared that you would misunderstand me, I would have asked you all to come and see us. Stiva is an old friend of Alexis'," said Anna, blushing.

Dolly was confused, and hardly knew what to say.

"The joy of seeing you makes me unreasonable," said Anna, again embracing her. "But you must promise to be quite frank with me, and to keep nothing back from me, now that you are going to see what my present life is.

My one aim is to live so as to bring evil on no one but myself. But we will talk of all this later on."

"And your little daughter, how is she?" asked Dolly.

"Anny? Oh, she is very well. Would you like to see her? Come with me, and I will show her to you. We have had much trouble with the wet nurse—an Italian woman—but as the baby is very fond of her, we have been obliged to keep her."

"But what have you done—" began Dolly, wishing to ask what name the child bore. She stopped short, seeing a cloud gather on Anna's face. "Have you not weaned her yourself?" she added, quickly.

"That was not what you were going to say," replied Anna, reading her sister-in-law's silence. "You were thinking of the child's name, were you not? It is Alexis' one trouble that she has none but Karénine."

The nursery was a spacious, well-furnished room, equipped with every new and costly luxury for enhancing infantine comfort. An English nurse, a woman of vulgar, and—in Dolly's eyes—unpleasant appearance, was with the child. The little girl, with her black hair, healthy looks, and amusing ways went straight to Dolly's heart; but there was something displeasing to her in the general aspect of the nursery. How could Anna keep a woman such as the nurse was, whose appearance suggested how little she had been used to "respectable" households? Anna herself seemed like a stranger in her own child's nursery. She knew nothing of its toys and such trifles, and could not answer the dozen little questions which one mother puts to another when she sees her child.

"I feel that I am useless here," she said, as they left the room. "How different it was with the elder one!"

"On the contrary," began Dolly, timidly, "I should have thought—"

"Oh, no! You know I looked after Serge entirely myself," said Anna, with that fixed look as if she were seeking something far off. "But I am like some creature dying of hunger, and who, finding itself in the presence of plenty to eat, does not know what to commence with. It is you who have brought me this plenty, and to whom, if not to you, can I open and lay bare my heart? But now we must go down-stairs and join Alexis."

CHAPTER II.

DURING the afternoon Dolly found herself alone with Wronsky. Anna had been called away on some domestic matter.

"I think I am right," he said, gravely, "in looking upon you as one of Anna's truest friends."

Dolly felt uneasy. What was he going to say or ask of her? To beg her to receive Anna in her own circle when they should come to Moscow; or, perhaps, to make some inquiry as to Kitty's welfare and condition?

"Anna loves you very dearly," he continued, after a moment's silence. "Will you use your influence over her in my behalf? Of all her former friends, you are the only one—I speak of friends—who has come to see her. I know that it is not from any approval of our relations, but simply that you are sufficiently attached to her to be anxious to make her situation more supportable. Am I not right?"

"Yes; but—"

"No one could feel more bitterly than myself"—he went on, interrupting her—"the difficulties of our life. Unless you consider me utterly heartless, you will give me credit for so much."

"Most assuredly," said Dolly, touched by the sincerity with which he spoke. "But do you not exaggerate these difficulties? The world, perhaps, condemns you—"

"It is simply purgatory! You can not picture the agony which Anna suffered at St. Petersburg."

"But not here. And neither you nor she, I suppose, have any wish to return to your old world?"

"How could I wish it?" exclaimed Wronsky, impetuously.

"You are spending a pleasant life here, and can continue to do so. As for Anna, from what she has had time to tell me, she is perfectly happy."

"Yes," he replied; "but will that happiness last? I am frightened of the future. Have we acted for the best or the worst? The die is cast; we are joined together for life. We have a child, and may have others; but," he added, "*my* daughter is Karénine's. If I were to have a son to-morrow, he would be a Karénine, unable to inherit

my name or my property. Can you not understand what a frightful thought this is? Picture to yourself the feelings of a man who knows that his children—the children of the woman he adores—do not belong to him; that for a father they have a man who must necessarily hate them, and who will never recognize them. Is it not horrible?”

He stopped, overcome by his emotion.

“But what can Anna do?”

“Now,” said Wronsky, controlling himself, “you have touched upon the real subject of our talk. Anna can obtain a divorce. Your husband obtained Monsieur Karénine’s consent to it, and all that was required was that Anna should have written to him. And that is why I am repeating to you, princess, as the one friend who can assist us: help me to convince Anna of the necessity for demanding a divorce.”

“Willingly, very willingly,” said Dolly, recalling her interview with Karénine; but her first thought was: “Why has not Anna reasoned with herself like this?”

“Yes,” she added, aloud, “I will certainly speak to her;” and their conversation ended as dinner was announced.

It was not until they had retired for the night that Dolly and Anna found opportunity for their talk. As Dolly was undressing, the door of her room opened, and Anna, clothed in a white dressing-gown, came in.

“And how is Kitty?” asked Anna, seated near the window and looking at Dolly with a curious air of humility. “Tell me the truth: does she not bear me a grudge, and dislike me?”

“No, no,” said Dolly, smiling; “but you know there are some things a woman never forgives another.”

“That is very true,” said Anna, quietly, gazing out through the open window. “Kitty is happy, is she not? I am told her husband is an excellent man.”

“There is none better. Kitty is very happy. But now tell me about yourself. I have had a talk with—” She paused, not knowing by what name to speak of Wronsky.

“With Alexis,” interposed Anna, “and I can guess what your conversation was about; but still I would like you to tell me.”

“We spoke on a subject which I should have avoided with you had he himself not mentioned it—of the possi-

bility of rendering your present position right and formal in the eyes of the world."

"You mean through a divorce? Betsy Tverskoï has urged the same thing; not that I wish to compare you two for a moment—she is the most depraved woman in existence. Well, what did he say?"

"That he is suffering on your account and on his own. If that implies selfishness, it springs from a sense of honor. He would legitimize your daughter, become your husband, and assume a husband's rights."

"Could a wife belong to her husband more completely than I do to him? I am his slave."

"But he can not bear to see you suffer. And, then, it would legitimize your children—give them a name to bear."

"What children?"

"Anny, and those you still may have."

"Oh, you can be easy on that point. I shall not have any more."

"Anna! How can you speak like that?"

"Because I do not wish to have any. You think I am wicked and immoral, but you must remember that such children would be unfortunate creatures, compelled to blush for their parents and their own birth."

"That is precisely why you should obtain a divorce."

"Perhaps, if it were possible," said Anna, quietly.

"I am told your husband would consent."

"He would *not* consent. He is under the influence of the Countess Lydia."

"But why not try?" urged Dolly, gently, her heart full of sympathy for Anna.

"Supposing I were to try—even supposing I were to succeed, after humbling myself in the dust before him—would he let me have my son? No. He will grow up in his father's house—the father whom I have deserted—and learn to despise me. Picture it! The two people whom I love most, whom I love equally—Serge and Alexis—can never come together!"

She passed up and down the room, her hands pressed against her breast, her face full of grief.

"They are all I have to love in the world," she continued, "and I can not unite them. Nothing else matters to me. You do not know what I suffer." She sat down beside Dolly and took her hand. "Do not despise

me—I don't deserve it; but rather pity me, for what woman was ever more wretched?" And she broke down and wept.

* * * * *

In spite of the persuasions of her hosts, Dolly was firm in her resolve to return home the next morning. She breathed more freely when at last she found herself some distance from the house and the horses' heads turned toward their own stable. Her leave-taking of Anna had been very sad, for Anna felt that perhaps the last attempt had been made to restore her to her former and her better self, and Dolly, on her part, could see no light ahead in the life of her unhappy friend.

She found her children well and anxiously awaiting their mother's return. To the others she described the elegance of Wronsky's house and the cordiality of her reception, but would not allow herself to make any critical remarks.

"To understand just how they are," she said, "one must see them at their own home."

CHAPTER III.

WRONSKY and Anna spent the whole summer and a great part of the autumn in the country without any thought or plan for their future movements.

During October the elections for the government of Kachine—the province in which Wronsky's estate was situated—took place, and, in fulfillment of a promise given some time before, he decided to assist in person.

It was not until the eve of his departure that he told Anna of his coming absence for several days, and even then he spoke coldly and curtly, dreading an outbreak of unreasonable jealousy on her part.

To his surprise, she received the news quite calmly, merely asking him the exact date of his return.

"I hope you will not be lonely while I am away," he said, trying to read her real feelings from the expression of her face.

"Oh, no," she answered, quietly; "I have just received a parcel of books from Moscow. They will occupy my time."

He went away without any further explanation, but with a vague sense of uneasiness in his mind. The little scene

though so few words had been spoken, left a painful impression in the minds of both.

Anna, though she made heroic efforts to accept his absence stoically, was hurt by the cold and imperious manner in which he announced his departure. "Of course," she said to herself, "he has the right to go and come as he pleases—he has all the rights, while I have none. Still, it was not very generous of him to make me feel it. And his looks? Surely he is wearying of me."

During the day she occupied her mind and endeavored to banish all such thoughts with her household cares and duties; to gain rest at night she had recourse to morphine. In the state of mind at which she had now arrived, a divorce seemed to her the only means by which she could prevent Wronsky from abandoning her. Divorce implied marriage, and she resolved that so soon as he should again broach the subject, she would no longer resist.

So five days passed, and on the sixth her little daughter was attacked by some childish and trifling indisposition. Anna sent a message by special dispatch, telling Wronsky of the child's severe illness, and no sooner had it gone than she regretted having sent it. What would he say and think on finding that the child's illness had been a mere passing trifle? Yet his return would mean happiness for her. Doubtless he would regret his liberty and find his domestic ties irksome; but he would be there; she would see him, and would not lose sight of him again.

She sat by the table, endeavoring to read by the light of a shaded lamp the latest work of Taive and listening to the wind and storm outside. Her nervousness increased each moment. She begrudged the child its recovery to health, for now the emptiness of her excuse for recalling him was apparent.

When she heard at last, however, the wheels of his carriage, every other thought vanished but that she was about to see *him*, her lover. She ran down-stairs and met him in the hall as he was removing his traveling cloak and wraps.

"How is Anny?" he asked at once, before she reached him.

"Much better. And you?" She seized both his hands and drew him toward her.

"I am very well," he said, coldly examining the dress

which he knew she had put on to please him. Though such attentions pleased him, they had done so now for a long time, and the fixed look of sternness did not leave his face. "How have you been yourself?" he asked, kissing her hand, and they passed upstairs.

The evening passed cheerfully enough. Wronsky related the different episodes of the election in which his party had been victorious, and Anna told him of all the little trifles which had occurred during his absence and which she thought would please him.

Before retiring for the night, Anna determined to discover what effect her message had had.

"Own that my letter displeased you," she said, "and that you do not believe what I said was true."

"Yes," he answered—and in spite of the tenderness of his manner she could see that he had not forgiven her—"it was certainly very strange. You wrote me that you were exceedingly uneasy about her, and yet you expressed a wish to come to me."

"Both were true."

"I do not doubt it."

"Yes, you do doubt it; I can see that you are annoyed."

"Not at all. The only fault I have to find is that you will not admit the possibility of my ever having business of importance to attend to. However, we will say no more about it."

"And why not?"

"I have only this to say—speaking of business—it is absolutely necessary for me to go to Moscow."

"So," said Anna, with a sudden change in her tone, "you return one day, only to leave again the next. If you are tired of this life—"

"Anna, do not be unkind. You know that I am ready to sacrifice everything for you."

But she went on, without appearing to hear him:

"When you go to Moscow I shall go with you. I will not remain here alone. Let us live together or separate forever."

"My only wish is to live with you; but, for that, it will be necessary—"

"A divorce? I will write at once. I see now that I can not continue to live like this. I will follow you to Moscow."

"You say it in a very threatening tone," said Wronsky, smiling; "but it is all that I myself wish for."

His look, as he said this, was that of a man exasperated by continual persecution, and Anna saw it and understood it. The impression she gained in that moment never afterward left her mind.

She wrote to Karénine, demanding a divorce, and toward the end of November arrived with Wronsky in Moscow.

CHAPTER IV.

THE Levines had been in Moscow for two months, in order that Kitty might avail herself of the best medical attendance during her confinement, which was now close at hand.

While her husband looked forward to the event with fear and trembling, she herself was quite calm and confident. For her, the little one already existed, the proof of which was best shown by her frequent sufferings. She felt a new love springing up in her heart. Never had her happiness been so complete; never had she been so caressed and petted by all around her. The only shadow to her joy was her husband's condition; he was restless, gloomy, and excited by turns; his quiet dignity and composure, to which she had become accustomed, were gone, and she felt a genuine pity for him. Moscow could furnish no fitting occupation for him; the life of such friends as Oblowsky had no charm for him, and for this Kitty was devoutly thankful. Nor did he care for the society of women, even of those who now belonged to his own family.

The most important event of Kitty's life at this time was her meeting with Wronsky—a meeting which took place one day at the house of her godmother, the Princess Marie Borissowna. She was calling there with her father, and when Wronsky was announced, she felt her heart begin to beat tumultuously, and as if every drop of blood in her veins had rushed to her face.

The old princess hastened to draw Wronsky into a political discussion, and Kitty soon felt that she had regained entire control over herself. She exchanged some words with Wronsky, joked with him about his prominent part in the recent Kachine elections, and then, devoting her conversation to her godmother, did not turn her head to-

ward Wronsky until he rose to take his leave; then she bid him a simple and courteous adieu.

When Wronsky had gone, her father made no remark whatever concerning the unexpected meeting; but Kitty could see that he was well pleased with her and the manner in which she had borne herself.

When she next saw her husband, she told him of the meeting.

"I was sorry you were not present," she said, "or, rather, I would have liked you to be looking at and listening to us through the keyhole; for, had you been there, I should probably have lost my self-command. See how I am blushing even now."

Levine himself was blushing even more than she. Her words and sincere look dissipated any annoyance he might have felt at his wife's meeting with Wronsky. Hitherto he had avoided all chance of meeting the count, but now he said to himself that the idea of flying from any man, however much he might formerly have been mixed up in his life, was childish and absurd. In future he would rather court than avoid such meeting. The opportunity to prove his words came even sooner than he expected. Dining one evening with Stépane Oblowsky at his club, they met Count Wronsky in the smoking-room.

"I think you have both met before," said Stépane, full of the good humor consequent upon an excellent dinner and still more excellent wine. "Levine," he added, addressing Wronsky, "is one of my two dearest friends, and as you are the other, I want to see you both as friendly to each other as I am."

"Then all we have to do is to embrace immediately," said Wronsky, laughing, as he held out his hand to Levine. The latter pressed the hand which was offered him, and said, cordially: "I shall be very pleased to carry out Stépane's wishes."

"And I also," rejoined Wronsky; but in spite of their mutual satisfaction in meeting, they were both at a loss what next to say.

"Levine has not yet met Anna, you know," said Stépane, "and I want to introduce him."

"She will be changed," answered Wronsky. "I would ask you to come with me at once; but I must stay here and look after Yashvine, who has been dining too well, and is

now in the card-room. He is quite capable of losing everything he possesses, and I am the only one who seems to have any influence over him;" and he left the room to re-join his friend.

"Why should we not call on Anna without him?" said Stépane, taking the other's arm. "I have promised for a long time to take you. What are you doing this evening?"

"Nothing at all. I will go with you with pleasure."

"Agreed!" said Stépane; and having ordered his carriage, the two men left the club and drove to Anna's house.

CHAPTER V.

As they entered the house, Levine felt decidedly nervous. He followed Stépane up the stairs, glancing in the mirrors which lined the stair-way, to see if his confusion was apparent in his face. Madame, the servant told them, was in the library with a visitor—Monsieur Varkouef.

They passed into an anteroom in which hung the portrait of Anna, painted by Mikhaïlof, in Italy. Levine stood before it fascinated. To his mind, a more beautiful woman could not exist.

"I am very glad to see you," said a voice, evidently addressed to him; and, in the half obscurity of the room, Levine recognized the original of the picture, dressed in a simple, tasteful fashion, but bearing the same charm which the artist had been quick to note.

She welcomed him most warmly, and led the two men into the library, where she introduced them to her other visitor—Varkouef.

"I am glad to meet you," she said to Levine, "for—thanks to Stiva and your wife—I seem to have known you for a long time. I shall never forget the impression the Princess Kitty made upon me—she is like some beautiful flower. I hear she is soon to become a mother."

She spoke so naturally that Levine at once felt at his ease, and as if they were old acquaintances.

"May we smoke?" asked Oblowsky.

"It is for that purpose we have taken refuge in Alexis' library," she answered, offering a cigarette-case to Levine and taking one herself.

"And how are you to-day?" asked Stiva.

"Oh, very well; rather nervous, as usual," she answered, carelessly. "If you will take some tea with me, I will ring," rising from her seat and removing a book which lay upon the table.

"Will you let me see that?" said Varkouef, pointing to the book, which had been written by herself.

"No, no; it is stupid and amateurish. I am sure Monsieur Levine would—"

"I have already told him about it," interrupted Stépane.

"You were wrong. My little scribblings are like the works written by prisoners, which their friends outside the prison sell for them—they are works of patience."

In Levine's eyes the *abandon* with which this woman spoke was an additional charm; she seemed to have no wish to avoid the thorns and difficulties of her situation, and her serious expression heightened the beauty of her face. A feeling of tenderness and pity for her overpowered him. Anna allowed her two visitors to pass into the salon, and herself remained behind to talk with Stiva. Of what was she speaking? Of the divorce? of Wronsky? Levine was so moved by his own thoughts that he did not hear a single word of the rhapsodies Varkouef poured forth on the book which she had written. As they drank their tea, the conversation became general; but through it all Levine was listening only to Anna, admiring her intelligence and culture, her wonderful, yet natural tact, and seeking to analyze her inner thoughts and sentiments. He who had formerly been so prompt and severe in his judgment of her, now thought only how to make excuses for her, and the idea that she was suffering and that Wronsky was unconscious of it grieved him to the heart.

It was quite late when they rose to take their leave; but to Levine it seemed as if their visit had lasted but a few minutes.

"Good-bye," said Anna, holding his hand, and with a look in her eyes which troubled him. "I am glad the ice is broken. Tell your wife that I think as much of her as formerly, and if she can not condone the position I am in, tell her how fervently I hope she may never come to understand it; for, before one can forgive, one must have suffered."

"I will tell her," answered Levine, simply.

"Was I not right?" asked Stépane, when they had left the house. "Is she not a remarkable woman?"

"Yes," answered his friend, "she *is* a remarkable woman. One can see that her attraction is not merely outward. She has a good heart; but she is suffering."

"Yes, her situation is sadder than ever it was. We have been arranging for the divorce—her husband has given his consent, but difficulties have arisen on account of her child, and for three months matters have not advanced at all. However, I hope everything will soon be arranged. When the divorce has been granted, she will marry Wronsky and her position will then be acknowledged and secure."

Their ways lying different, they bid each other good-night and parted.

CHAPTER VI.

WHEN her visitors had gone, Anna commenced to pace up and down the room, deep in thought. She did not conceal from herself that for some time past she had found it possible to indulge in a certain amount of coquetry or worse toward different men, and, in this case, she owned that she had done her best to turn Levine's head. But although he had pleased her, and although, like Kitty, she found some secret likeness between him and Wronsky, it was not of Levine she was now thinking. One idea, and one idea only, possessed her.

"Why, if I can exercise an attraction over a married man, and one who is in love with his wife, can I no longer attract *him*? Why has he become so cold? He loves *me* still, but there is something dividing us. He has kept away all evening, with the excuse of taking care of Yashvine—as if Yashvine were a child! Can he not understand the horror of the life I am leading?" and tears of pity for her own lot started to her eyes.

The bell sounded, and Anna hastily recovered herself, and taking up a book, made a pretense of reading.

Wronsky entered the room, and coming to her, asked in a cheerful and animated tone, if she had not grown tired of waiting for him.

"Oh, no," she answered; "I have have ceased to do that, and, besides, Stiva and Levine called upon me."

"Yes, I know. And were you pleased with Levine?" he asked, seating himself by her.

"Very much; they have only just left. What did you do with Yashvine?"

"What a terrible gambler he is! He won seventeen thousand roubles, and I succeeded in getting him away from the game. Then he gave me the slip, went back, and at this moment has probably lost everything."

"Then why look after him?" said Anna, curtly, raising her head and meeting Wronsky's cold glance. "After telling Stiva that you would stay with him and keep him from playing, you end up by deserting him."

"In the first place, I gave Stiva no authority to say anything of the sort," answered Wronsky in a cold and decisive tone. "In the next, I am not given to lying; and, lastly, I have acted exactly as it suited me to act." Then after a moment's silence, he added: "Anna, Anna, why this fault-finding?" He held out his hand to her, hoping that she would place her own in it. Her ill-temper held her back.

"There can be no doubt," she said, as Wronsky sharply drew back his hand, "of your having done exactly as you pleased. But why make a point of that? It is a question of stubbornness and obstinacy, and resolves itself into this—which of us shall prevail? If you only knew how, seeing your attitude against me, I feel as if I were on the brink of a precipice, how frightened I am of myself!" And she turned away her head to hide her sobs.

"But what is it all about?" cried Wronsky, frightened at this despair, and taking her hand to raise it to his lips. "Do you reproach me for seeking distraction outside? Do I not shun the society of every woman?"

"There is no necessity for that."

"Come, now," he said, "tell me what I can do to make you happy? I would do anything to save you a single grief!"

It touched him to see her so unhappy.

"It is nothing," she answered; "only being alone, perhaps—and my nerves; let us speak no more of it. Tell me what you were doing all afternoon. Did you go to the races?" She strove to conceal the pride she felt in having forced this strong and resolute nature to bend before her.

Wronsky, while they sat at supper, told her of all his

doings during the day; but his voice and his look became colder each moment, and Anna quickly understood that she must pay for the victory she had gained, and that he would not forgive her words, "I am afraid of myself; I feel as if I were on the brink of a precipice." It was a dangerous weapon to have used, and one which could no longer serve her. She felt that it had raised a barrier between them, which, strive as they might, neither she nor Wronsky could break down.

CHAPTER VII.

ABOUT this time Stépane Oblowsky's private affairs necessitated his presence in St. Petersburg. Before leaving Moscow for the capital, he promised Anna that he would see Karénine again on the subject of the divorce. On the pretense of submitting a scheme he had formulated in regard to the public finances, Stépane called upon Karénine, and was at once admitted. They discussed the *pros* and *cons* of Oblowsky's scheme, and the latter, indeed, was only too glad to postpone the inevitable moment when he must enter into the more delicate and family matter. At last, however, he was forced to speak.

"There is another matter I wish to speak to you about," he said, feeling uncomfortable and ill at ease. "You can guess what it is. Anna—"

Karénine's face at once assumed an expression of severity. "What is it, now, that you wish of me?" he asked, taking his seat again.

"Some definite decision, Alexis Alexandrovitch. I am speaking to you now, not as"—he was about to say, "a deceived husband," but stopped himself in time—"not as a statesman and a public character, but as an ordinary Christian, a man possessed of a heart. Have pity on her."

"In what way?" asked Karenine, quietly.

"It would give you infinite pain if you could see her. Her position is a cruel one."

"I was under the impression," said Karénine, dryly, "that Anna Arcadieвна had obtained all she desired."

"Do not let us bandy words, Alexis Alexandrovitch; we are not dealing with the past; what she now wishes for is a divorce."

"I understood that, in case I insisted on keeping my

son, Anna Arcadievna refused a divorce. My silence, therefore, was equivalent to an answer, for I look upon that point as definitely settled," said Karénine, quite hotly.

"Let us review the whole matter calmly," replied Stépane. "At the time you separated, with unheard-of generosity you consented to let her have possession of the boy, and consented to a divorce. Then she felt too guilty toward you and too humiliated to accept the offer; but ^{an} intervening time has proved to her that, by so doing, she brought an unbearable condition of affairs upon herself."

"Anna Arcadievna's condition is of no interest to me whatever," said Karénine, raising his eyebrows.

"You must allow me to doubt the truth of that," replied Oblowsky, quietly. "Admitting that she herself deserves all that she suffers, the fact still remains that we are all made unhappy thereby, and beg you to have compassion. Who can profit by her misery?"

"Really, one would imagine that I am to blame for it."

"No, no; I simply wish to persuade you that you can lose nothing by lightening her load of suffering. Besides, you have already promised; let me arrange the whole thing—you yourself shall not be troubled at all."

"My consent certainly was given," said Karénine, his lips trembling visibly; "but on conditions which I should have thought Anna Arcadievna would at least have had the grace to understand—"

"She no longer asks for the child. She merely wishes the means of escaping from her present position. To her it is a matter of life or death. For the last six months she has been living in a fever of doubt and expectation. Her position is like that of a criminal condemned to death, but who has no inkling as to when the fatal moment is to arrive. Again I ask you to have pity on her; and as to any scruples—"

"No need to speak of those," interrupted Karénine in a tone of disgust. "But it is possible that I promised more than I had the right to."

"Then you refuse?"

"I do not refuse as yet; but I demand time to reflect. You, I am aware, are a free thinker—I am not; and in a question so grave as this there is more than man's law to be considered."

"Does not our church sanction divorce, then?" asked Oblowsky, springing from his seat.

"Not in this sense."

"I can not understand you. It was you yourself who formerly said—"

"I shall be obliged if you will cut this conversation short," interrupted Karénine, rising suddenly and trembling in every limb.

"Forgive me for having pained you," said Oblowsky, confused, and holding out his hand; "but I was obliged to carry out the mission I was charged with."

Karénine placed his hand in Stépane's, and, after a moment's reflection, said:

"You shall have my positive answer within two days. I have much to think over, and must consult others."

Within the appointed time Stépane received from Karénine his definite refusal on the subject of divorce. He had little difficulty in ascribing the result as largely due to the Countess Lydia's influence.

CHAPTER VIII.

NOTHING so complicates the ordinary details of life as a want of accord between the man and woman. Often one sees a family suffering for years from the effects of trifling differences which, at the start, a little mutual reasoning would have easily dissipated.

Wronsky and Anna had arrived at this condition. Spring came and turned to summer, and summer, in its turn, to autumn, and they still remained in Moscow, though their sojourn there was equally hateful to both. And yet there was no serious cause for misunderstanding between them save Anna's nervous irritability and Wronsky's cold reserve. Day by day the breach widened. For Anna there was no other object in life but love and her lover, nor could she bring herself to look upon things from any other point of view. If the count did not devote himself entirely to her, she suspected him of infidelity, and her blind jealousy caused her to suspect every woman whom she knew. Sometimes she suspected him of the gross material loves open to him as a bachelor; at others, certain women of society aroused her jealousy, and especially the young girl whom, in case of any rupture with herself, she felt

sure he would marry. This particular distrust had been planted in her mind by an imprudent confidence of Wronsky's, who one day alluded to his mother's want of tact in imagining that he could and would propose to the young Princess Sarokine. Jealousy led her to such lengths that she came to look upon him, the man whom she adored, as responsible for their long stay in Moscow, the uncertainty of the life she was now living, and, worst of all, for the grievous separation from her son. Wronsky, on his side, rebelled against the false position in which Anna's obstinacy had placed him, and held her responsible for the increase of difficulties in their lives. If, in some rare moments, he lapsed into tenderness, Anna made no sign of appreciation, but seemed to look upon it as simply her right.

One evening Anna was waiting in Wronsky's library for his return from a bachelor dinner he had been forced to attend. Their last interview had been marked by a disagreement on some trivial subject which had resulted in some unjust and bitter words from her as she made her escape from the room.

In solitude during the whole afternoon she had had time to reflect, and, deeply wounded as she was by her lover's coldness, she determined to take all blame upon herself and effect a reconciliation at any cost.

"It is my foolish jealousy," she argued with herself, "which makes me so irritable. When I have obtained his forgiveness, we will go to the country, and there I shall grow calm." Her thoughts again veered round to her own sense of injury. "If he seeks to offend and hurt me, it is because he loves me no longer, because he loves another—" But with an effort she broke away from this constant and fatal thought, and, to distract her mind, gave some orders to the servants in regard to the preparations for leaving town.

Wronsky returned home about ten o'clock.

"Well, and how did the dinner pass off?" asked Anna, going toward him with a conciliating air.

"Just as such affairs always do," he answered, noticing the change in her manner. "But what is this?" he added, noticing the half-filled trunks. "Packing up? That is good!"

"Yes; we may as well leave town. The walk I took

to-day made me long for the country, and there is nothing to keep us here."

"All I ask is to get away. Will you order tea while I change my coat?"

His approval of the preparations for departure was given—so it seemed to Anna—in a tone of patronizing superiority; he spoke as one might to a spoiled child whose caprices must be indulged. Anna felt an inclination to resist come over her. Why should she humble herself before this arrogance? Yet, when he returned to the room, she controlled herself and spoke quietly of the plans she had formed for leaving Moscow.

"It came upon me like an inspiration," she said; "it will at least cut short this state of ceaseless expectation. I wish to forget all about the divorce. Am I not right?"

"Certainly," he answered, noticing, with uneasiness, the emotion she displayed. "When shall we leave?"

"The sooner the better. I am afraid I can not be ready by to-morrow; but the day after—"

"That will be Sunday, and I am obliged to go to see my mother."

He noticed a look of suspicion come into her face at once. The fact that the Princess Sarokine was staying with his mother, the countess, flashed across her mind.

"Could you not go there to-morrow?" she asked.

"Impossible. The procuration to which I have to get her signature will not be ready, and without that I can not get the money I want."

"Then we will not go at all."

"And why not?"

"Sunday, or not at all."

"There is no sense in that!" cried Wronsky, astonished.

"Not in your eyes, perhaps, for you think only of yourself, and have no wish to understand what I suffer here."

"It is you who willfully and purposely misunderstand me," replied Wronsky. "I am always thinking of you and for you."

"That is not true; and for one who boasts of his rights—"

"I am neither accustomed to boast nor to lie," said Wronsky, with difficulty repressing his anger, "and I very much regret that you do not respect—"

"Respect," she interrupted, "was invented to conceal

the absence of love. If you no longer love me, it would be more honorable in you to acknowledge it."

"This is intolerable!" exclaimed the count, approaching her almost threateningly. "There are limits to my patience—why prove them?"

"What do you mean by that?" she asked, frightened at the rancorous look he turned upon her.

"It is I who, rather, have the right to ask what you claim from me?"

"What can I claim except that you do not abandon me, as you have every intention of doing. Everything else is of small importance. I wish to keep your love, and if you no longer love me all is over."

She walked toward the door.

"Stay," said Wronsky, holding her by the arm, "what is this difference between us? I express a wish not to leave here for three days, and you reply by telling me that I lie and that I am not an honorable man."

"Yes, and I repeat it. A man who can throw in my face the sacrifices he has made for me is worse than dishonorable—he is heartless!"

"My patience is exhausted!" exclaimed Wronsky, allowing her to go.

Anna went into her room and threw herself upon a sofa.

"He hates me!" she sobbed. "I am sure of it now, and surer still that he loves another. All is over! I must go away; but how, and where?"

All sorts of contradictory thoughts passed through her mind. Should she go to her aunt who had brought her up as a girl, to Dolly, or simply among strangers? Would this rupture be definite? What would her husband and all St. Petersburg say? A vague, half-formed idea troubled her. She recalled some words she had said to Karenine during her convalescence: "Why am I not dead?" and again the same feeling came over her. "Yes, to die is the only means of escape. My own shame, the dishonor I have brought upon my husband and my son, will all be wiped out by my death. Then *he* will regret me, and will love me."

"Anna," said a voice near her, "I am willing to do anything. We will leave the day after to-morrow."

Wronsky had quietly entered the room and was speak-

ing in an affectionate tone. She heard his words, but did not raise her head.

"Well?" he asked.

"Do as you wish," she answered, and the sobs broke out again. "Leave me, leave me!" she murmured. "I will go away—I will do more! What am I? A lost, dishonored woman, a stone around your neck. I will trouble you no more. You love some one else; I will relieve you of myself."

Wronsky implored her to be calm, swore to her that she had no cause at all for jealousy, and strongly protested his own love for her.

"Why torment yourself like this?" he asked.

Anna imagined that she could notice the tears in his eyes and in his voice. Passing suddenly from jealousy to the most passionate tenderness, she covered her lover's face and hands with kisses.

CHAPTER IX.

OUTWARDLY the reconciliation was complete. As soon as morning came, Anna, without fixing the time of their departure, busied herself with packing and the various preparations. To her surprise, for the hour was still early, Wronsky entered the room dressed and ready to go out.

"I am going at once to see my mother," he said. "Perhaps she will be able to send me the money, and then we can leave to-morrow."

The idea of this visit disturbed Anna's good humor.

"No," she said; "there is no occasion to trouble yourself. I shall not be ready myself by then; but do exactly as you wish. Now, if you will go to breakfast, I will join you in a few minutes."

As she entered the dining-room, his valet brought Wronsky a telegram.

"From whom is it?" she asked.

"From Stiva," he answered, carelessly.

"Then why do you not show it to me? What secret can there be between my brother and myself?"

"Stiva has a mania for telegraphing. What need had he to send me a dispatch simply to say that nothing had been decided."

“As regards the divorce?”

“Yes. He claims that he can not get a definite answer; but read it for yourself.”

Anna took the telegram with trembling fingers. Its closing words were:

“Small hope; but, possible or impossible, I will do everything in my power.”

“Did I not tell you last night,” she said, “that it was a matter of indifference to me. There was no necessity for your trying to conceal it from me. I was in hopes that you were as little interested as myself.”

“I am interested because I like to have things clearly defined.”

“Why, what need have you of a divorce, if love exists?”

“Always ‘love’!” said Wronsky to himself, with a slight grimace. “You know very well,” he said, aloud, “that if I wish it it is on your account and your children’s.”

“There will be no more children.”

“So much the worse. I am sorry.”

“You think only of the children, and not of me,” she said, forgetting that he had included her in his wish.

“On the contrary, I do think of you, for I am convinced that your irritability is mainly owing to the falseness of your position,” he replied in a cold, abrupt manner.

“I can not see how my position can affect my irritability,” said Anna. “The situation seems perfectly clear to me. Am I not absolutely in your power?”

“Yes; but you distrust me and grudge me the slightest liberty.”

“Oh, as to that, you can reassure yourself,” she said in a provoking tone. “Your mother’s plans for your marriage trouble me very little.”

“We will not talk of her.”

“Certainly; for I assure you a heartless woman, young or old, has no interest at all for me.”

“Anna, I must beg you to have some respect for my mother.”

“A woman who can not see where her son’s honor lies can have no heart.”

“I ask you again not to speak so of her,” repeated

Wronsky, raising his voice. "Whatever my mother may be, I must—"

"You must take her part," interrupted Anna; "and as for myself, I know what there is left for me to do," and she rose to leave the room.

At that moment, the door opened and Yashvine was announced. Anna, striving to conceal her agitation, wished him good-morning, then, "Have they paid you your money?" she asked—for she knew that, the previous day, Yashvine had won an immense sum.

"I shall probably receive it this morning," answered the giant, perfectly conscious that his arrival had been at an inopportune moment. "When do you leave?"

"The day after to-morrow, I think," said Wronsky.

"Do you never pity the unfortunate men who lose to you?" continued Anna, still addressing Yashvine.

"It is a question I have never considered, Anna Arcadieвна. My whole fortune is here," he said, touching his pocket; "rich at this moment, I may be penniless when I leave the club to-night. I would lose my very boots to the man I am playing with, and not grumble; it is the struggle and excitement which give me pleasure."

As he spoke, another caller was announced—a man with whom Wronsky had some business—and Anna left the dining-room.

Before leaving the house, Wronsky came to the room in which she was, and searched for something among the papers on his writing-desk. Anna at first pretended not to notice him, but ashamed of such deceit, asked:

"What are you looking for?"

"The certificate of a horse I am just going to sell," he answered, indifferently.

As he left the room, having found the paper, he thought that Anna called him.

"What is it, Anna?" he asked, standing by the door.

"Nothing," she answered, coldly.

"So much the worse," he said.

In a mirror on the wall he caught sight of a face so full of sadness that the idea came to him to go back and comfort her. But it was too late; the door was already closing behind him. He spent the whole day away from the house, and when he returned home, the maid informed him that

Anna Arcadieвна was unwell and had begged not to be disturbed.

CHAPTER X.

NEVER before had a whole day passed without a reconciliation, and to Anna it seemed as if this last quarrel meant indeed a rupture.

She pictured to herself the manner and the very words with which he would break off from her. "I will not hold you back," he would say; "you can go. As you will not accept a divorce, it must be that you count upon returning to your husband. If you should require any money, you have only to let me know the amount." And then, the next moment, she said to herself: "But only yesterday he swore that he loved me, and me only. He is an honest and truthful man. Have I not causelessly distressed myself before now?"

When evening came, she retired to her own room, and gave to her maid the message that she was ill. "If, in spite of that," she thought, "he comes to me, I shall know that he still loves me; if not, all is finished, and I shall know what to do."

She heard his carriage roll up to the door, his steps as he mounted the stairs, and his colloquy with the maid, Annouchka. Then his footsteps passed away, he entered his library, and Anna knew that the die was cast. Death appeared to her the only means by which she could punish Wronsky, triumph over him, and regain his love. Their departure for the country, the decision as to a divorce, were matters of no importance whatever; the one thing was—his punishment!

She took the vial of opium, and thought how easily its contents could effect all that she now desired. Then, all at once, her feelings changed, and a great fear of death came over her. "No, no," she said; "anything rather than death! I love him; he loves me also. These evil days will pass away." To shake off her fears, she took a candle and went to Wronsky's library. He was sleeping quietly. She stood gazing at him, crying softly, but careful not to awake him and doubtless meet that stern and freezing look. She returned to her room, poured out and drank a double dose of opium, and had soon forgotten

everything in a heavy, dreamless sleep. When she awoke, the events of the previous day came slowly back to her.

"Why should I have given way to such despair?" she asked herself. "On account of a quarrel? It was not the first. Then I pretended to be ill, and he was unwilling to disturb me. To-morrow we must go away. I must see him, speak to him, and hasten our departure."

When she had risen, she went toward Wronsky's room; but as she passed through the salon, the noise of wheels attracted her attention and she looked out through the window. A coupé had just stopped at the door. Its occupant was a young, and, so far as she could see, a remarkably pretty girl. She heard Wronsky descend, saw him go down the outside steps and approach the carriage bareheaded. The girl handed him a package, smiling as she spoke to him; then, after a short conversation, the carriage drove away, and Wronsky again mounted the stairs.

This little scene dissipated the numbness which had come over Anna's mind, and the impression of the past evening returned more vividly than ever. How could she so abase herself as to pass another day under his roof?

She entered the library to make her intentions known to Wronsky.

"The Princess Sarokine," said Wronsky at once in a perfectly easy tone, "has just brought me the papers and the money from my mother. How are you this morning?" he added, not noticing the somber and tragic look upon her face.

She stood in the middle of the room, watching him as he glanced over the papers in his hand, and said not a word. Then she turned slowly away, and was passing from the room.

"By the way," he exclaimed, "is it settled that we leave to-morrow?"

"You, but not I," she answered.

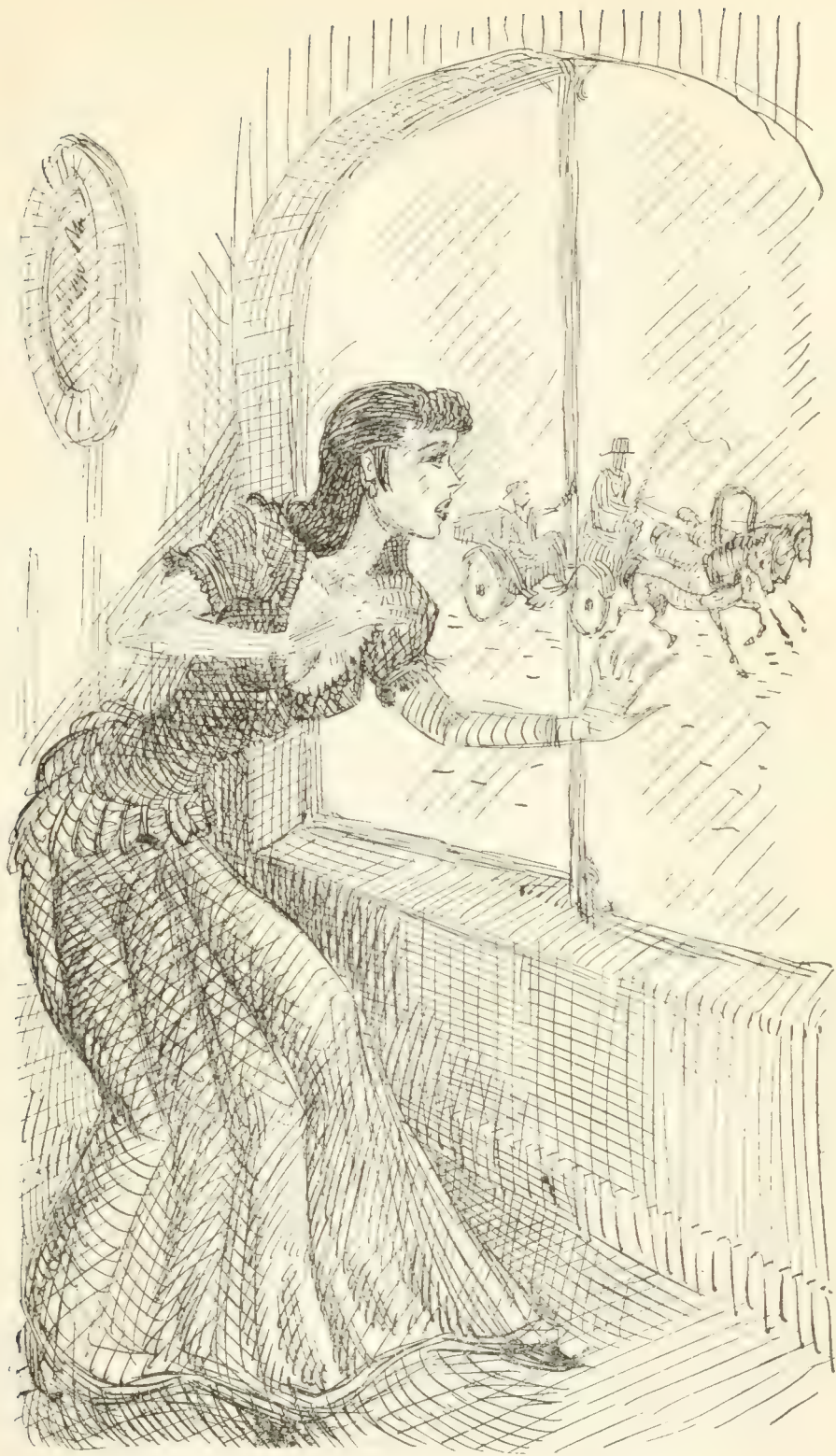
"Anna, it is impossible for us to continue living like this!"

"You, but not I," she repeated.

"This is intolerable!"

"You—will be sorry for this," she said, and went out.

Frightened at her words and manner, his first impulse was to follow her; but he reflected for a moment, and muttering between his teeth: "I have tried every means I could



think of. I must see what indifference will do," he left the room, and, presently, the house.

Anna heard him pass through the dining-room, stop in the ante-chamber and give some orders about the horse he was about to sell. She heard the carriage drive up to the door, and, running to the window, was in time to see him give some order to the coachman, and then, sitting in his usual position, with one leg crossed above the other, he was driven away.

As the carriage turned the corner of the street, he disappeared from Anna's sight.

CHAPTER XI.

"HE has gone!" said Anna to herself, standing by the window, and the old feeling of horror came over her. She was afraid to remain alone. She rang, and walked to the door to meet the servant.

"Find out where the count has gone," she said.

"To the stables, madame; and he left word that you should be informed that the carriage would come back and be at your disposal."

"Very well; I am going to write a note which you will take to the stables at once."

She sat down and wrote:

"I am to blame, but, in God's name, come back. All shall be explained. I am afraid."

She sealed the note and gave it to the servant, and then, dreading to be alone, she went to her little daughter's nursery.

The little one was sitting at a table, playing with some toys in front of her. She looked up when her mother entered the room, and the movement of her eyes, the sound of her laugh, reminded Anna so vividly of Wronsky that she could not bear it. She hurried from the room. "Is it possible that the end has come?" she thought. "He will come back; but how can he explain his animation and his smile when he was talking to *her*? I will accept any excuse from him. If the worst comes, I have a comedy, and shall not begrudge it."

Ten, fifteen, twenty minutes passed, and Wronsky did not return. She looked at her watch. "Ten minutes to

go, ten minutes to return; he should be here by now;" and she began to count each minute as it passed on the face of the little dial.

A carriage drove up to the door, but she did not hear his step upon the stairs. The valet brought to her the note she had given him. "The count had already gone to the Nijni railway-station," he said.

"Well, take the note to him immediately, at his mother's country house, and bring me back the answer."

What should she do to while away the time of waiting? She would call on Dolly. A sudden thought came to her—she could telegraph to him.

She wrote out and sent a message:

"I must speak with you. Come back quickly."

A few minutes later she was dressed in out-door costume, and on her way to Oblowsky's house.

The weather was clear and fine. During the morning a light rain had fallen, and the roofs of the houses still glittered in the bright May sunlight. It was three o'clock, and the streets were crowded and full of life and bustle.

"Are there any visitors?" she asked, as she entered the ante-chamber in Dolly's house.

"Catherine Alexandrovna Levine," the servant answered.

"Kitty—the Kitty that *he* was in love with, and whom he regrets not having married, while he curses the day when he met me."

The two sisters at that moment were deep in consultation over the nourishment of the little child that had been born to Kitty. When Anna was announced, Dolly alone came to the saloon to receive her.

"Not gone yet?" she said. "I was thinking whether I should find you if I called. I have had a letter from Stiva."

"We received a dispatch from him," said Anna, turning to see if Kitty, too, were coming.

"He writes that he can hardly understand exactly what Alexis Alexandrovitch wishes; but he will not leave without obtaining a definite answer."

"You have visitors?"

"Yes—Kitty," answered Dolly, somewhat confused.

"She is in the nursery. She has been quite ill since her child's birth, you know."

"So I heard. Can you show me Stiva's letter?"

"Certainly; I will go and get it. Alexis Alexandrovitch has not refused; on the contrary, Stiva has great hopes," she said, pausing by the open door.

"I myself hope and wish for nothing." "Will Kitty think it beneath her dignity to meet me?" thought Anna, when she was alone. "Perhaps she has a right to, though it is not for her, who was once in love with him, to try and teach *me* a lesson. I have sacrificed everything for him, and this is my reward! Ah! how I hate him! Why did I come here? If I wish to see Kitty, it is only to show her that I am insensible to everything, that I have no faith in anything."

Dolly came back with the letter. Anna glanced over it and handed it back to her.

"I knew that already," said Anna. "I do not care at all."

"Why not?" asked Dolly. "I myself have every hope." She had never seen Anna in such a mood before. "When do you leave?"

Anna half closed her eyes and looked straight before her without answering. "Is Kitty afraid of me?" she asked, glancing toward the door.

"What an idea! She is nursing the child, and can hardly leave it just yet. On the contrary, she will be delighted to see you. Ah! here she is!" for during her absence from the room, Dolly had, with much difficulty, persuaded her sister to see Anna.

Kitty came in, blushing, and held out her hand to Anna.

"I am very glad to see you," she said in an unsteady voice. All her prejudice against this "wicked" woman vanished at the sight of Anna's face.

"I should not have blamed you for refusing to see me," said Anna. "You have been ill, they tell me. You are very much changed since I saw you."

Kitty attributed Anna's hard, dry tone to embarrassment caused by her false position. The girl's heart went out to her in compassion.

They talked of Kitty's illness, of her child, of Stiva; but Anna's preoccupation was evident.

"I came to make my adieus," she said to Dolly, as she rose.

"When do you go?"

Again Anna did not answer. She turned to Kitty with a smile. "I am very glad to have seen you again. I have heard so much about you, even from your husband. You know he came to see me. I like him very much," she added, with an ill-natured intention. "Where is he at present?"

"In the country," answered Kitty, blushing.

"Please give him my warmest regards. Don't forget."

"I will be sure and do so," said Kitty, with a look of pity.

"Good-bye, Dolly," said Anna, embracing her.

When Dolly had escorted her to the door, the two sisters talked together of Anna. Even Kitty could see that she was unusually unhappy.

"She is not herself to-day," said Dolly. "I thought she would have burst into tears just now in the ante-chamber."

CHAPTER XII.

SEATED again in her carriage, Anna felt more unhappy than ever. Her meeting with Kitty had awakened, to a painful extent, the sense of her own moral degradation, and a new suffering weighed upon her. Almost without knowing it, she ordered the coachman to drive home.

"They both looked upon me," she thought, "as some strange, incomprehensible being. And I had thought of confiding everything to Dolly! I was right to keep silent; my misfortune would have given her pleasure, although she would have tried to hide it. And Kitty? She would have been still more pleased—I could read it in her face. She hates me because I took the man away from her whom she would have married. Ah! if I was what she thinks I am, how easily I could have turned her husband's head! The thought of doing so did strike me, I will admit."

So lost in her thoughts had she been, she was surprised when the carriage stopped at her door.

"Has any answer come?" she asked the footman.

He handed her a telegram.

"I can not return before ten o'clock.

"WRONSKY."

"And the messenger?" she asked.

"He has not returned yet, madame," said the man.

As Anna mounted the staircase, a longing for revenge arose within her. "I will go and find him myself," she thought; "before leaving him forever, I will tell him what he has done. Never have I hated any one as I now hate this man!" The sight of one of Wronsky's hats in the ante-chamber caused her to shudder as if with disgust. She had not considered that the telegram was merely an answer to her own, and not to the message which could not yet have reached him. "He is at his mother's house, laughing and talking, careless of the suffering he has caused. I must go at once," she said to herself, without knowing whither she should go; "take the train, and follow him, humiliate him!" She consulted a guide, and saw that the evening train would leave at a few minutes past eight. "I shall get there in time." Ordering fresh horses to be put to the carriage, she hastily filled a small hand-bag with such things as were necessary for an absence of some days. She had decided not to return to the house. After her interview with him at his mother's house or at the railway-station was over, she would go on by the Nijni line and stop at the first town she came to.

Dinner was served, but she could eat nothing. She went to the carriage as soon as it came to the door, and was driven to the Nijni terminus.

Her mind was still in a turmoil and almost devoid of sense and reasoning power. She endeavored to pick up the thread of the thoughts which had flitted through her brain as she drove home from Dolly's house, but without much success. She could not fix her attention on any one point. For the first time, by the aid of some mysterious enlightenment, her true relations with Wronsky, and the life she had been leading, were revealed to her. "What did he seek for in me? The satisfaction of his vanity rather than that of love?" Wronsky's words and his expression of dog-like submission after the first moment of their *liaison* returned to her memory and confirmed this thought: "What he strove for, above everything, was the triumph of success. He loved me, but chiefly out of van-

ity. Now that he is no longer proud of me, everything is over. Having taken all that he could take from me, and finding nothing more worth boasting of, he feels that I am a burden to him. Perhaps he still has some love for me—but of what sort? At the bottom of his heart he will be glad to be relieved of me. While my love has from day to day become more passionate, his has gradually faded away. I have sought to draw him to me; he has tried to escape from me. He accuses me of being ridiculously jealous. I acknowledge it, but, in truth, it is because my love has not been satisfied. If I could, I would be a reasonable and reasoning friend to him, not a passionate mistress; but I can not change. What can happen that could bring me happiness? Supposing Alexis Alexandrovitch consents to a divorce; that he gives up Serge to me; that I marry Wronsky! Will Kitty respect me any the more? Will not Serge still ask me why I have *two* husbands? Will not Wronsky change toward me? Can the relations between him and myself ever bring me—I will not say happiness—but freedom from torture?”

The footman's voice at the carriage window broke through her thoughts: “Shall I take a ticket for Obiralowka?”

It was some moments before she could realize where she was and the meaning of his words.

“Yes,” she answered, giving him her purse, and stepping from the carriage with the little bag in her hand.

She took her place in the railway carriage which the footman had secured for her; she heard the conductor close the doors, the third bell rang, the locomotive gave a shrill whistle, and she saw the walls of the station glide slowly past the windows, as if the train were yet standing still.

For a time the motion and the fresh air revived her; but she soon sunk back into the same train of thought. When she arrived at her destination and left the carriage, she walked behind the crowd, seeking to avoid any contact with the outside world, and waited on the platform, asking herself what she was going to do next. The carrying out of her original plan, half formed as it had been at first, seemed now almost impossible. Her one thought was: Where should she take refuge from every one? At last she forced herself to ask a station hand if Count Wronsky's coachman had not arrived at the station with a message.

"Count Wronsky? Why, he is visiting the Princess Sarokine and her daughter. Is not this the coachman?"

At that moment Anna saw the coachman, Michel, approaching her, carrying a note with an air of proud importance at having executed his mission. She tore it open, and, with a breaking heart, read:

"I am sorry your note did not reach me in Moscow. I will return at ten o'clock. WRONSKY."

"It is all right. This is what I was waiting for," she said, with a queer, sardonic smile. "You can return home now." She spoke gently and quietly, though the beating of her heart almost suffocated her. "No," she thought, "I will not permit you to make me suffer again like this;" and she began to walk up and down the platform. "My God! where shall I fly to?" she asked herself, noticing the passers-by examining her face and rich costume.

When she reached the end of the platform, she stopped. Some women and children were standing talking to an elderly man wearing spectacles, whom probably they had come to meet. They also ceased their conversation and turned to look at Anna as she passed. She quickened her steps. A freight train was approaching the station, its heavy cars causing the platform to shake. She could imagine she was again in a moving train. Suddenly she remembered the man who had been crushed to death on the day she first met Wronsky at Moscow, and at last she understood what was left for her to do. With a quick and light step she descended the steps which ran down from the end of the platform to the track, and walked in front of the train. She calmly looked at the large driving-wheel of the locomotive, its thick spokes and axle, and tried to measure with her eyes the distance between the front and hind wheels of the first car.

"There," she said to herself, looking at the shadow cast by the car upon the gravel mixed with small pieces of coal which covered the ties, "there, in the middle. He will be punished, and I shall be freed from every one and from myself."

The slight difficulty she had in removing the little traveling-bag from her arm caused her to miss the proper moment for throwing herself underneath the first car; she

waited for the second. A feeling such as in by-gone days she had experienced before plunging into the water, came over her, and she made the sign of the cross. The familiar gesture awoke in her mind a crowd of memories of her youth and infancy; life, with its fugitive joys, shone for one moment before her; but she kept her eyes fixed upon the car, and when the space between its two sets of wheels appeared, she threw aside her bag, bent her head between her shoulders, and with her hands joined together in front of her, threw herself upon her knees under the car. For the space of an instant she had time in which to feel afraid. "Where am I? Why?" she thought to herself, making an effort to throw herself back again; but an enormous, unyielding mass struck her upon the head and seemed to clutch her by the back. "Lord pardon me!" she murmured, conscious of the utter uselessness of struggling. And the light which for this poor unfortunate had illumined the book of life with its troubles, its treacheries, and its griefs, rent the darkness, shone with the brightest rays, then flickered, and went out forever.

CHAPTER XIII.

Two months had passed away.

The neighborhood of the terminus of the Kursk railway was crowded with carriages bringing volunteers and their friends to the train which was to bear them on their way to the seat of war.

Among the bustling, hurrying crowd which filled the station was Serge Ivanitch, who was about to visit his brother, Constantin Levine, at the latter's home.

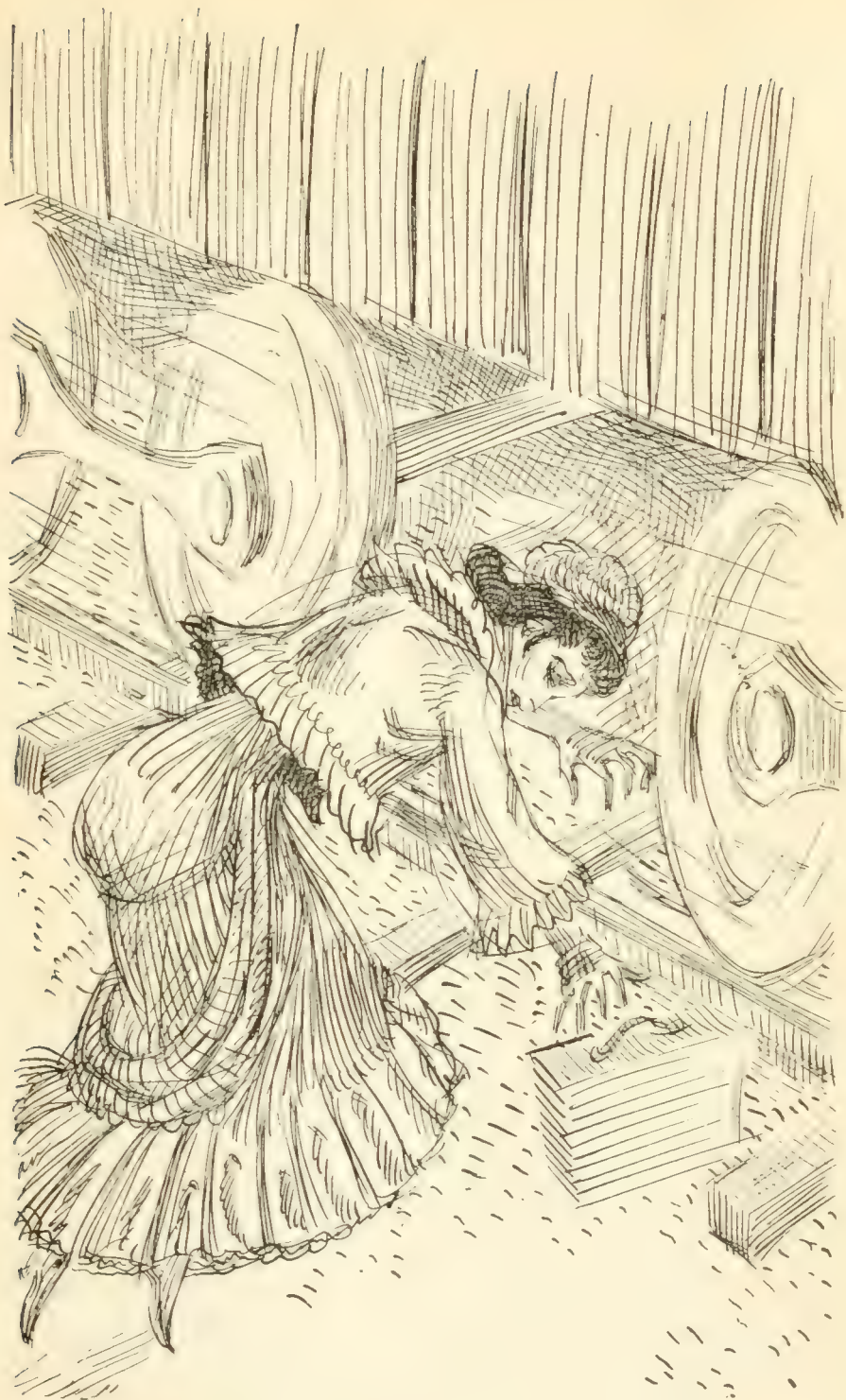
As he walked along the platform, he was stopped by one of the numerous ladies who were present, carrying large bouquets with which to do honor to the departing heroes.

"I am going into the country, to my brother's, princess," he said in answer to her questioning. "I need a change. You, however, I see," he added, with a smile, "are not going to leave your post."

"No, indeed. Tell me, is it true that we have already equipped eight hundred men?"

"Nearly a thousand, counting those who do not go direct from Moscow."

"Splendid! Have you seen the latest dispatches? We



have beaten the Turks again. By the way, do you know who is leaving to-day? Count Wronsky."

"I heard that he was going, but did not know he left to-day."

"I have just seen him. He is here with his mother. As a matter of fact, it is the best thing he could do."

"Certainly; without a doubt," said Serge Ivanitch.

"Whatever they may say," the princess went on, "I am sorry for poor Wronsky. I never liked him myself; but what he is now doing should wipe out a great many faults. You are aware that he has equipped a company at his own expense? There he is!"

Wronsky at that moment passed along the platform. He wore a long military cloak, and his face was almost hidden by a soft, wide hat. His mother leaned upon his arm. As he passed the princess and Serge Ivanitch he raised his hat and showed his features aged and worn by grief. The next moment he had disappeared among the crowd.

Having taken leave of the princess, Serge Ivanitch walked toward his own carriage. On the way he passed that in which the Wronskys were. The old countess was seated near the window. She called him to her.

"I am going as far as Kursk with Alexis," she said.

"So I have heard," replied Serge, noticing that Wronsky was absent from the carriage. "He is doing a sensible and wise thing."

"What else would you have, after his misfortune?"

"It was a terrible affair!"

"Terrible! that is no word to describe it. But come in and sit with me until Alexis returns," said the countess, making room for him. "You can form no idea of what I suffered. For six weeks he never opened his mouth, and it was all I could do to induce him to take food. We were really frightened about him. You know that he nearly killed himself once before on her account. Yes"—and the countess's face darkened—"that woman died as she had lived, shamefully and miserably."

"It is not for us to judge her, countess," said Serge, gravely; "but I can understand how you yourself suffered."

"Don't speak of it. My son was at my house, where I spend the summer, when a note was brought to him which

he immediately answered. No one suspected that she was at the station. During the evening, my maid told me that a woman had thrown herself beneath a train. I immediately suspected, and said at once: 'Don't let the count hear of it!' but he had been already told—his coachman was at the station and saw it all. I hastened to my son. He was like a madman. Without a word he left the house. When he came back, he was so changed I could hardly recognize him. Soon after he lost his reason and was delirious. Ah! that woman was thoroughly bad. Can you understand a passion of that sort? What did she expect to prove by her death? She ruined the lives of two men, both of exceptional merit—her husband and my son—and went to perdition herself."

"What has the husband done?"

"He has adopted the little girl. At first Alexis consented to everything; now he is sorry that he has given his daughter to a stranger. But can he be blamed? Karénine was present at the funeral. We contrived to prevent a meeting between him and Alexis. For the husband, her death was a deliverance; but my poor son, who had sacrificed everything for this woman—his own mother, his position in society, his career—and to end like this! No; say what you will, her end was that of a creature utterly without religion. May God pardon me, but when I think of the evil she has done my son, I can only curse her memory!"

"How is he now?"

"This war has saved him. It has brought him back to life. His friend Yashvine, who has ruined himself at play, goes with him to Servia. The preparations distracted his attention. Have a talk with him, I beg of you. He is so sad; but I know he will be glad to see you. There he is, across the platform."

Serge Ivanitch left the carriage and made his way toward Wronsky. At first it seemed to him that the latter wished to avoid a meeting; but thinking of the promise to the mother, Serge went up to him, and a cordial greeting passed between the two men.

"Perhaps you would have preferred my leaving you to yourself," said Serge. "You must excuse my insistence; I want to offer you my services."

"There is no one I would avoid less than yourself," an-

answered Wronsky. "Pardon me for any apparent rudeness; life offers me few enough agreeables."

"I can understand that. I have thought that a letter to Ristich or to Milan might be of use to you," said Serge, struck by the look of deep suffering in the count's face.

"Oh, no," he answered, as if hardly comprehending the other's words. "Shall we walk a little? The carriages are so close and stuffy. A letter? No, thank you. Does one need a letter in order to be killed? In that case, one to the Turks, perhaps—" he added, with a poor attempt at a smile.

"Well, as you wish. I want to tell you, though, how glad I was to hear of your determination. You have done infinite good to the volunteer cause which so many people have been attacking."

"My only merit," answered Wronsky, "is that I am willing to give up my life. As to energy, I know that I shall not be found wanting, and it is a consolation to me to put the existence with which I am burdened to a useful end."

"Allow me to predict," said Serge Ivanitch, touched by his words, "that you are going to enter into a new life. May God give you all success, and send you the peace of mind you are so sorely in need of."

"I am little more than a wreck," said Wronsky in a low tone, pressing the hand which Serge held out to him. His eyes fell upon the tender of the locomotive as it came sliding smoothly and quietly along the rails, to be attached to the train. The sight brought back his grief in its cruellest form to him. He saw *her* again, or, rather, what was left of her, lying in a wooden shed close by the railway track, where they had carried her. He saw the body covered with blood, stretched out before the prying eyes of every one; the head untouched, with its thick braids of hair and light curls about the temples, was thrown back, the eyes half closed; the lips, slightly open, seemed about to utter over again their terrible threat, and to predict, as at his last interview with her, "You will be sorry for this!" It was always thus. Though he strove to recall her image as he first met her at this very station—her poetical and charming beauty, her life and gayety, the happiness she seemed to enjoy and to shed on all around her—it was not so that he saw her; but always a face full of anger and

an implacable desire for revenge came before his eyes, and the joys of the past were poisoned for all time.

His whole body was shaken by a sob.

The signal was given for the train to start; the two men again pressed each other by the hand, and parted.

THE END.



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